

The Academy

A Weekly Review of Literature and Life.

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The Literary Week.

MR. THOMAS HARDY, we understand, has a new volume of *Poems* nearly ready for the press, which will include his poems inspired by the War. Unlike most of the War poetry, they certainly gained for themselves the epithet "unforgettable."

MR. RUDYARD KIPLING is with the Fleet. A former holiday of this nature, it will be remembered, produced *A Fleet in Being*, and the verses on the cruiser.

We have received the following from a well-known novelist: "People think that striking situations, or good dialogue, are got by studying life: they will not rise to understand that they are prepared by deliberate artifice, and set off by painful suppressions." I agree with the latter half, not with the first, of this passage, which I have just read in R. L. Stevenson's *Letters*," adds our correspondent. "I think one should constantly study life, not slavishly, but imaginatively, as Turner studied landscape, the clouds, and the sea. Out of his great and precise knowledge he composed pictures. This, I take it, is the art of book and play writing. If you would invite correspondence on the subject, it might be an interesting, useful thing for the general reader." We do invite it.

MESSRS. METHUEN have in preparation a new series of books for children. This series will consist sometimes of new matter, sometimes of old; sometimes a book will contain one long story, sometimes several short stories: sometimes not a story at all, but something more instructive though not less interesting. The aim of the editor, Mr. E. V. Lucas, is to get entertaining or exciting stories about normal children, the moral of which is implied rather than expressed. The first three volumes arranged for are: *The Castaways of Meadow Bank*, by Thomas Cobb; *The Beechnut Book*, by Jacob Abbott, edited by E. V. Lucas; *The Air Gun; or, How the Mastermans and Dobson Major nearly lost their Holidays*, by T. Hilbert.

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD has completed a new epic poem of about 4,000 lines. Its subject is the circumnavigation of Africa by the Phœnicians six hundred years before the Christian Era. It is entitled "The Voyage of Ithobal." The hero is a sea-captain of Tyre, who takes service with Neko, king of Egypt, to explore the unknown waters beyond the Red Sea. After picturesque scenes at Tyre—where he buys in the Slave Market, with a priceless pearl, an African princess made captive in the Dark Continent, and alone knowing its secrets—he builds three ships at Suez and sets forth. All this is minutely described, together with full details of the voyage of fifteen thousand miles round Africa. Returning, with two out of the three ships, after numerous and exciting adventures, which bring out almost every feature of African life and scenery, Ithobal relates the story of his enterprise in a discourse of seven days before the throne of Pharaoh, who loads with honour the successful captain, the princess (his wife), and his crews.

A CORRESPONDENT writes: "I noticed some correspondence in your paper with regard to odd rhymes. It is not generally known that extraordinary assonances are as easy to find as they are difficult to reject when once the Muse has played with them. I have done much in this line. The following verse abashes the 'short night' verse, though I say it who shouldn't:

‘INTERRUPTION.

FICKLE SAMUEL *loquitur*:

As Baby, rubbing off his eye
The print of strawberry jam,
Will still for cake and toffee sigh
And sing his dithyramb,
So I within my office eye
With joy a new pet lamb,
Although I hear soft Sophy sigh
For her affianced Sam,
The which I grieve to prophesy
I shall not be who am
Wearing two hearts for trophies—I
Whose heart is but a sham.
But, hist! I know that cough is ei-
Ther Kate's or—Amsterdam!
Ten pounds to one 'tis Sophy's! Ay!—
Good Heav— Good evening, ma'am."

THAT useful and interesting book, *Annals of Politics and Culture*, edited by Mr. G. P. Gooch, with an introduction by Lord Acton, which we noticed in our issue of March 9, has a particular interest for bookmen. From 1492 to 1899 the name of the important book, or books, of the year is given, or the literary event of the year, in such a way that it can be found at a glance. Turning the leaves the eye falls on such entries as these:

- 1851.—Kinglake's *Eothen*.
Stanley's *Life of Arnold*.
Disraeli's *Coningsby*.
1855.—Thackeray's *Newcomes*.
The *Saturday Review* founded.
1873.—Pater's *Essays on the Renaissance*.
1880.—Shorthouse's *John Inglesant*.
Thompson's *City of Dreadful Night*.
1891.—John Oliver Hobbes' *Some Emotions and a Moral*.
1895.—W. B. Yeats's *Poems*.

"I FOUND the following lines," writes M. G. C., "quoted in a book of essays last April. If any of your readers can tell me where they come from I shall be grateful:

'Look you be sure,
Take here the lure,
Ride you there, ride you for one, two, and three.
Down the King's fist
With the drag of the wrist
Dragged down the pomegranates pierced with the Bee.

On to your courser,
Spare not his horsehair,
Ride to the knight of the tower by the sea.
Long ago bade he
Carry my lady
Into his tower, carry her, carry me."

AFTER more than forty years' service in the offices of the Board of Trade, Mr. Austin Dobson has just resigned his post of Principal of the Fisheries and Harbour Department; and it is his intention to devote his well-earned leisure to literature. Mr. Dobson has been doing that for many years, but we may now doubtless look for more sustained efforts from his pen. Indeed, it is understood that his first task will be to write a life of Samuel Richardson. A complete and scholarly life of this novelist is undoubtedly needed, for Miss Thompson's recent attempt, whatever its merits, could not be considered final.

A PASSAGE in an article on the late Bishop Stubbs in the *Church Quarterly Review* shows that the sternest and driest of historians revelled in historical romance. It also throws a little light on the effect which a bishopric may have on a man's reading: "His recreations, he wrote, were 'making out pedigrees and correcting proof-sheets.' But he was also a voracious novel-reader. It used to be said of him that he read *Monte Cristo* once a year before he was a bishop, and twice a year afterwards, and he half admitted the impeachment. As is the case with many students, omnivorous reading was his diversion, special reading his work. He seemed to read everything and to remember everything."

THE late Bishop's love of local history was deep, and those who wish to lay their hands on a defence of this branch of knowledge will find it in the passage from a lecture delivered at Reading. After observing in his dry way, "We are not all philosophers, we are not all judges, or we are not all, thank goodness, members of local boards or county councils, but we do live in homes, county towns, villages, old houses or new neighbourhoods, we all have had parents, who had their homes and their family traditions," he went on:

There is not an acre, I think I may say, in England—certainly there is not a parish or a manor—that has not its place in English history, either as the scene of some considerable act or as the home of some considerable man; and there is not, I think, an intelligent person in England who is not in one way or another a sharer in such interests of tradition, if he would or could realise it. By realising your own personal connection with these, you realise your historical relation to the progress of your country, and by working out the details of the local or personal history in which you are so interested, you may yourselves largely contribute to the ascertaining of historical truth in details. Every parish must have a history, every parish has a register, every person has a parish. Every manor has a lord, and every lord has had a share in the struggles by which our national life has become what it is; and every lord has had a following of his tenants, whose blood, shed for him, as it may have been, quite as certainly as for the cause in which he was enlisted, may constitute for us, who are not descended from lords of manors, our personal link with the past. Of course, some parts of England have been the scenes of more bloody battles and keener political conflicts than others, but it is very rare to find any district which has not its own special traditions and local affections.

TAKE up what paper we will, we find some reference to the novel that booms and its intrinsic merits. A writer in the "Contributors' Club" of the *Atlantic Monthly* falls to talking about it to his cousin Augustina, a young woman with opinions. Augustina blames the good-natured critic for the public inability to distinguish between big sales and real worth.

"He should come out and say: 'My dear people, here is a new book, which in regard to style is without form and void. It contains no character that is vital enough to last. But it is a good book, a natural book, a perfectly harmless book. Read it, and you will still be able to sleep the sleep of the just.'"

"And what good would that do?" I asked.

"Well, the critic would tell the truth, and that is good for his soul. It might help to preserve the artistic balance. As it is, the crowd seems to be trying to perpetuate its amateur, lawless opinions. For the crowd," said Augustina, fixing a solemn eye upon me, "in spite of all the boards of education in this world or the next, will never know a piece of literature, even if it should live under the same roof with it."

"Well?" I said helplessly.

"This may be the land of the free," said Augustina, resuming the attack, "but it is not the home of the brave. Witness the general tone of criticism. What we need is some rude old Dr. Johnson to roar out to the good-natured critic, after some particularly genial effusion: 'Trash, sir, trash, and you know it! Is this your method of serving the ends of literature? Are you not aware, sir, that every author needs at first a good sound licking?'"

"Go on, Augustina," I cried, from my corner.

"I am thinking of organising a Society for the Preservation of the Adjective," said Augustina. "Between the publisher and the critic, and the critic and the crowd, it bids fair to decline into a state of chronic invalidism. I have a sentimental attachment for the adjective; a good, virile one has many a time prevented me from the shedding of blood."

"Go on."

"The publisher and the critic and the crowd together have so twisted and wrenched and hammered and beaten the adjective that it is fast going its way to the ambulance and the hospital. The national government should be called on to insist upon all writers abstaining from the use of this important little part of speech until it has recovered its old-time vitality and health."

"Well?"

"Now listen," and she rattled off a long list of words, and stopped for breath. "'Cohesive' is the last, a brand new one, but it is already showing signs of senile decay. Suppose Fielding or Thackeray were to come back from the tomb: with what word could we hail him? Or suppose someone should actually write the Great American Novel?"

And this was the last word I could get out of her.

THAT Boston still keeps up its serious reading in spite of the literary high jinks of the hour, is brought home to us by the current number of *Poet Lore*, in which we find the following questions on *Romola* propounded:

Does George Eliot mean Tito to represent, somewhat like Browning's Greek in "Pietro," a type of Greek influence and philosophy that is beautiful, but dangerous, needing to be checked by a sense of the equality of others and of obligation to them?

Does George Eliot inculcate through *Romola* too grim an idea of justice, fealty, and duty?

Is real love faithful in spite of any discovered unworthiness? Or is it weak to be constant under certain circumstances? Did *Romola's* submission accomplish anything?

A BIBLIOGRAPHY of recent "love letters" and "visits" might fill a momentary gap. The Unicorn Press sends us *The Visits of Henry VIII.*, by the author of *An Englishman's Love-Letters*. It is a sufficiently rollicking work, in parchment and ribbons. A "Note" informs us: "These Letters have never before appeared in print. It seems a pity, but it is so." The first letter begins thus:

The library here is large and old. The food, on the other hand, has points. They do you very well. They begin you early in your room, and they pursue from hour to hour wherever you may be. When you see a man coming towards you from the house, or from the conservatories, or from the home farm, or from the railway station, or from any other point of the compass, you may bet that his arms are creaking with viands, not to mention liquors. At lunch they make your eyes bulge. At dinner they gorge you to the sheer verge and steep of apoplexy.

LATER we have amusing particulars concerning Mr. Nummit, a Gaelic poet, who has the misfortune to love the girl already appropriated by Tommy's correspondent:

His love, of course, is of the hopeless brand, and he knows it. Also he grizzles about it, and is manfully doing his best to get a living out of it. Here is his latest effusion on the subject, which I commend to you for an exercise in scansion:

UL MOONA.

Ugh drafthen na ghwt ha Jashti
Fashnatet drifnathot Moona ma bushthel
Fiangstrif revocht ma clacher ner Uam
Ner sneech ner terbacher ner tam ochle drochle
Vertoch dhu der shee lochhabarten
Moona, Moona, Moona, lum shughar.

Now the untutored might not take that for poetry, Tommy, but I assure you Nummit knows how to scan it. And when he read it to us with the right stop on his voice, at least two of us broke down entirely and begged for a translation. Whereat Nummit, having smiled and looked meltingly heavenward, remarked: "Ah, you moderns! You have forgotten the beautiful sounds that the blue duck with the ivory bill made for King Boch in the Bitter Islands. You have no fairy green in your eye, and no hayseed in your pockets. In short, the fly from the golden spaces refuses to alight upon you. Come with me into the yeasty wildernesses of Find Horn, where the haddock is still smoked by the bare-legged maidens, and all the very brown sons of Half'un carry sporrans in their waistcoat pockets. Translation, forsooth! Why is not the Gaelic taught in our Heelan schules? Andrew me no Carnegies. I would not gie ye more'n a saxpence for a' the culture sooth o' the Coogit." And clutching his sandy beard convulsively, he ran off the lawn like a frightened deer, and was heard wailing in the shrubbery:

Moon, Moona, Moona, lum shughar.

THE task of writing the life of a reigning monarch is not an easy one, but in the case of Edward VII. it has been attempted by Mr. H. Whates in the "Bijou Biographies" (Drane). We have not examined Mr. Whates's pages, but his Preface begins thus: "This little sketch will excite the disdain of the courtier and the surprise of the sycophant. It is written for neither class, but for those to whom loyalty is not synonymous with servility, nor respect with fulsome adulation. An attempt has been made to give an estimate of His Majesty's capacities which shall be free from the nauseating flattery of conventional biography of modern Royalties, and to write an account of the facts of his life from which trivialities and mawkish sentimentalities are excluded."

THE new (eleventh) volume of the *Annual Index to Periodicals* has just been issued from the *Review of Reviews* office. In the new volume, which covers the year 1900, the contents of over 190 British and American periodicals published during the year, as against 117 in Volume I. (1890), are classified and arranged on the same plan as that which has found favour in the previous volumes. The bibliographical plan on which the Index is compiled shows all the articles on each subject gathered together in one place in the alphabetical arrangement, instead of being scattered throughout the volume under various, and sometimes synonymous, headings. The numerous cross-references used indicate the headings chosen. This arrangement makes the work very useful, especially to authors and students, for it enables them to see at a glance how far the ground on any subject, or branch of a subject, has already been covered by other writers. This year the price has been raised from 10s. to 15s., because, as we are informed, the receipts from sales at the smaller price do not cover the mere outlay in printing and paper, without reckoning anything for the heavy and exacting labour of compilation.

THE *Rambler* has distinguished itself at last. In sonorous periods it defends the sport of cock-fighting, and calls for its resuscitation. Fancy resuscitating Johnson's *Rambler* to resuscitate cock-fighting! We are glad to see that a more practical attempt to revive this cruel sport was defeated this week by the police. Says our mentor:

As a Champion of Kindness to Animals, the *Rambler* cannot but favour the fine old Sport of Cock-fighting, which has been exposed to much adscititious Detraction at the Hands of the Ignorant. Pugnacity is as natural to a Cock as to a Bull-dog or a School-boy, and the Cruelty of impeding him from the Gratification of his hereditary Instinct is very great. That Instinct, like every other Inspiration of Providence, has a Purpose in the terrestrial System. Indeed, there is perhaps no more pertinent Lesson of Courage and Endurance to be learned than that provided by the Spectacle of contending Game-birds. Even a Round of Boxing under the Marquis of Queensberry's Rules is scarcely more salutary to Education, and the Usefulness of any scholastick Establishment would be enhanced enormously by the Addition of a Pit to the Accessories of the Curriculum.

It has long been my Ambition to revive the Distraction of Cocking, and I shall welcome the Adherence of any Sports-men, who may be disposed to coalesce for the Formation of a Club. With the Aid of a circumspect Attorney, it should not be difficult to circumvent the anile Law, which seems to sustentate the Puritan's Abhorrence of Sport.

WHILE Mr. H. C. Beeching believes that literature can be taught, he discriminates. In the August *Longman's* for example, he desires to bring to the notice of "parents and guardians" the sort of teaching which is given in order to prepare a youth to answer questions like the following in the matriculation examination of London University: "Give a very short account of the life and chief works of two of the following: Milton, Swift, Wordsworth, Byron, Tennyson." Filled with knowledge about, instead of knowledge of, these authors, the students acquit themselves in such manner as Mr. Beeching describes in the case of Wordsworth:

Of Wordsworth's life such details as his birth at Cocker-mouth and his burial at Grasmere were generally known, as well as the fact that he lived in retirement; "took up," as one phrased it, "the position of retired poet." The papers then divided themselves into those which offered simply a more or less imaginative list of works, and those which gushed about the "poetry of Nature." "Wordsworth died a natural death. He was the author of the *Excursionist*." "Wordsworth was an early Victorian poet. He wrote the *Excursion*. He also wrote *The Ring and the Book*." "Wordsworth's *Excursion* is one of the finest poems of its sort ever written. Besides this, he wrote numerous preludes, which are very beautiful." "Wordsworth wrote *The Fate of the Nortons* and *Intimations of Immortality*." "Wordsworth regarded Nature as a sweetheart. His principal work is *Tales of a Wayside Inn*." "William Wordsworth is known as the poet of Nature. In his youth he received a university education, and that led him to say that the meanest flower that blew gave him thoughts too deep for tears. It seemed as if a blade of grass spoke to him. Probably the beauties of his home surroundings (Lake District) led him to love Nature. His longest poem was the *Excursion*; but many shorter ones are well known, as *Lucy Gray*, *The Post-Boy*, *The Pet Lamb*, while his *Ode on Immortality* is indeed grand." But for the unfortunate intrusion of the *Post-Boy*, one might perhaps have been almost persuaded that this young gentleman had read the poems of which he spoke so glibly.

Mr. Beeching's final recommendation is that boys should not be expected to cover the field of English literature in a scamper, but that, as in the cases of Latin and Greek, definite books should be set for their study.

FROM their American house, Messrs. Harper and Bros. send us a sheet on which is printed in colour a full-size

reproduction of the cover of *The Tribulations of a Princess*, by the author of *The Martyrdom of an Empress*. Appended is an account of the book done in a characteristically American way:

"The spirit of adventure was strong in me in those days," she confesses. And the recital bears out this candour. Fancy a woman, young, attractive, distinguished, visiting her childhood's friend, the Czar of all the Russias, for the purpose of asking him to pardon a Nihilist—a Siberian exile whom she believes unjustly convicted. At the station, she is met by an Imperial sleigh drawn by three magnificent black horses. At the palace, the gendarmes in blue uniforms and tall patent-leather boots, and the chevalier-guards, with their white uniforms and eagle-crested helmets, are stationed in picturesque groups. She is soon admitted alone to the presence of the Czar, who greets her kindly, but grows stern when she pleads the cause of the supposed Nihilist. "But you must do something, Sire," cried I, now quite beside myself. "Must?" said the autocrat, drawing himself up and gazing at me with rising anger. However, by tact and persuasion, she wins her cause, and with the same dash and pluck starts out with the Czar's passports and a few men attendants over the frozen Siberian plains to rescue the "convict." Perhaps her bravery is partially the outcome of a strange fact in her history—that she was taught to regard herself as a boy until her ninth year.

Bibliographical.

MR. GOSSE's collection of Mr. Austin Dobson's fugitive pieces is now, I believe, in the hands of the fortunate subscribers; and something, therefore, may not improperly be said about it. It is called *Carmina Votiva, and Other Occasional Verses*, and on the title-page is the motto—"Enter a Song, singing—Old Play." The "Carmina" are sixty-three in number, and occupy ninety-nine pages. There is a dedication: "To Andrew Lang, master of many things (the lighter lyre included), by his old friend the Author"; and at the back thereof, by way of motto, is a reprint of the rondel—

Too hard it is to sing
In these untuneful times—

which first appeared in *Evening Hours* in 1876. In the preface we are told that the "Carmina" "are alike in this, that none of them are now to be found in any of the author's published [and still obtainable] volumes. Some of them are printed from ephemeral sources, others have never appeared before, one or two have been restored from the earliest issues of his poems."

The volume, neatly printed on good paper, is one to be thankful for. We are grateful, to begin with, for the verses which we recognise as new to us. Not less grateful are we for the republication of lyrics which Mr. Dobson has dropped out of his later editions and his *Collected Poems*, but which many of us desired to preserve. Those of us who possess his early editions are all right on this point; but the younger generation is not so lucky. Take, for example, the following rondeau:

Rose, in the hedge-row grown,
Where the scent of the fresh sweet hay
Comes up from the fields new-mown,
You know it—you know it—alone,
So I gather you here to-day.

For here—was it not here, say?—
That she came by the woodland way,
And my heart with a hope unknown
Rose?

Ah yes!—with her bright hair blown,
And her eyes like the skies of May,
And her steps like the rose-leaves strown
When the winds in the rose-trees play—
It was here—O my love!—my own
Rose!

Now, this charming little thing appeared originally in the *Spectator* in 1876, and the editor of *Latter-Day Lyrics* (1878) persuaded Mr. Dobson to let him reprint it in the notes to that collection. *Latter-Day Lyrics*, however, has long been out of print; it is, therefore, delightful to find that Mr. Dobson has permitted the republication of the rondeau in *Carmina Votiva*. It will be observed that in the use of the refrain there is a certain play upon the word "Rose" which makes the rondeau, strictly speaking, not according to rule. But that is no reason why the lover of verse should be deprived of so pretty a bit of work. In like manner, one is glad to meet again in this privately-printed volume with the rondels "Change" and "Fair," the lines to G. H. Boughton and R. W. Gilder, and "The Peacock on the Wall." Greatest of all must be our gratitude to Mr. Gosse for bringing together so many stray pieces by Mr. Dobson from books, magazines, weekly periodicals, and so forth. From Mr. Gosse's own Library Catalogue are extracted some half-dozen trifles by his friend, which will be highly appreciated by the possessors of *Carmina Votiva*.

Some of my readers may like to have a list of the artworks of the late Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse, who is dealt with elsewhere in this issue from the purely literary point of view. In addition to work done in connexion with publications of the Burlington Fine Arts Club, Mr. Monkhouse was the author of a book on *The Masterpieces of English Art* (1869); *A Few Words about Hogarth* (1872); critical comments on W. Etty (1874), Sir C. Eastlake (1875), J. H. Foley (1875), and Sir E. Landseer (1877); *The Turner Gallery* (1878), *Turner* (in the "Illustrated Biographies of Great Artists") (1879), *The Italian Pre-Raphaelites* (1887), *Early-English Water-Colour Painters* (1890 and 1897), *In the National Gallery* (1895), and *British Contemporary Artists* (1899). He also wrote a preface to *The Life and Works of Joseph Wright, A.R.A.* (1885), and edited, with revision, Mrs. Heaton's *Concise History of Painting*. To the series of "Great Writers" he contributed, in 1887, a biography of Leigh Hunt. The above mentioned, with his single novel and his three books of verse, constitute Mr. Monkhouse's literary output.

We shall be glad to have the biography of Samuel Richardson, in the compilation of which, they say, Mr. Austin Dobson hopes to expend his earliest leisure. That, however, is no reason why we should altogether ignore, as a publicist has recently ignored, the modest effort in the same direction made recently by Miss (or Mrs.) C. L. Thompson, whose monograph did her considerable credit. Meanwhile, good is the news of the library edition of Richardson, which a London firm is said to have in preparation for us. During the last twenty years our publishers have set forth Richardson, for the most part, in humble guise. Two have given us abridgments of *Clarissa Harlowe* (1890 and 1893) and cheap reproductions of *Pamela* (both in 1891). Of *Sir Charles Grandison* there was a cheap reprint in 1886, and a more sumptuous presentment (abridged, though in two volumes) in 1895. That, so far as I know, is all; and it is obvious that the sooner we have a uniform edition of the works of the worthy but rather tiresome Samuel the better.

Of the sons of the late Dr. Gordon Hake, poet and physician, two have devoted themselves in the main, or to a large extent, to literature. The name of Mr. Egmont Hake is attached to several volumes, miscellaneous in subject. That of his elder brother, Mr. Thomas St. E. Hake, is best known to the lovers of fiction, of which Mr. Thomas Hake has been a fertile producer. One remembers his novel, *In Letters of Gold*, published in the later eighties; and I see that the editor of the *New Penny Magazine* (Cassell) is about to run Mr. Hake's *Within Sound of the Weir* through his popular pages. Mr. Hake is one of the few who can claim a long and intimate acquaintance with that genuine Bohemian of letters—Borrow.

THE BOOKWORM.

Reviews.

Moral Gower.

Works of John Gower. Edited by G. C. Macaulay, M.A.
Vols. II. and III. (Clarendon Press. 32s.)

ABOUT a year ago we reviewed the first volume of Mr. Macaulay's learned and sumptuous edition of John Gower, containing the newly discovered text of the French *Mirour de l'Omme* or *Speculum Meditantis*. The present instalment consists of two volumes, devoted to the long English poem in virtue of which Gower's fame, such as it is, survives the *Confessio Amantis*. To this is appended the address to Henry the Fourth, "In Praise of Peace," and a fourth volume, with the *Vox Clamantis* and other Latin poems, will, we suppose, conclude Mr. Macaulay's laborious task.

The *Confessio Amantis* has not, in the past, missed its need of praise. On the contrary, the critics of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were distinctly inclined to over-rate it. James the First of Scotland and Dunbar, Hawes and Skelton, Puttenham and Sidney, barely differentiate between the merit of Gower and that of Chaucer. The heresiarch John Bale is perfervid enough to declare him "the lamp of his age" and "alter Dantes ac Petrarcha." The immediate popularity of the *Confessio Amantis* is shown by the long list of MSS. which Mr. Macaulay is called upon to catalogue. The poem had the honour of being printed by Caxton, and fifty years after Caxton, in two editions, by Berthelette. Upon Berthelette the current texts, that in Chalmers's *English Poets*, and those of Pauli and of the late Prof. Morley, are based. Not unnaturally, their critical value is small, and for philological purposes they cannot be depended upon. But Gower, in the last quarter of the fourteenth century, stands at the philological parting of the ways, and the importance of an accurate text is, therefore, even apart from its literary value, great. Such a text Mr. Macaulay has spared no pains to provide, and the abundance of excellent MSS. has made his path comparatively straight. The version principally relied upon—one of the Fairfax MSS. in the Bodleian—is contemporary with Gower, and may have been prepared under his superintendence. With it Mr. Macaulay has collated others, representing different recensions of the poem, due to alterations made from time to time, upon literary or political grounds, by the author. He has further supplied a careful linguistic and grammatical study of Gower's English, an analysis of the somewhat diffuse text, a full glossary, and a body of notes bearing upon the sources from which Gower derived his stories and other matters of interest. The whole work is a monument of remorseless and well-informed industry, and is thoroughly worthy to stand by Prof. Skeat's magnificent edition of Chaucer with which, in outward seeming, it is uniform.

And for the literary merit of the *Confessio Amantis* itself? One may demur to the hyperbole of Bale and others, and at the same time be willing to admit that John Gower's masterpiece is neither negligible nor unattractive. Something of the historic spirit, indeed, is required to appreciate it. It is essentially in the mode of its day. Gower himself describes its intention with perfect justice when he says:

I wolde go the middel weie
And wryte a bok between the tweie,
Somwhat of lust, somewhat of love.

Gower is half minstrel, half schoolman. He will amuse, with a string of "smooth tales, chiefly of love," such as had certainly not yet lost their fascination for the expiring Middle Ages, even if they can be said to have done so yet; and he will edify, with his constant undertone of the pulpit, and his formal scheme of virtues

and vices. The allegorical setting of the piece is ingeniously managed, and extremely characteristic of an age whose imagination had been profoundly impressed by the somewhat frigid personages and methods of the *Roman de la Rose*. It is as follows: The lover walks abroad "whan every brid hath chose his make" in the month of May. His heart is heavy with unrequited love.

Unto the wode I gan to fare,
Noght for to singe with the briddes,
For whanne I was the wode amides,
I found a swote grene pleine,
And ther I gan my wo complainen
Wissching and wepinge at myn one,
For other merthes made I none.

As he is in this somewhat conventional plight there pass by the King and Queen of Love. Venus takes pity upon her servant, and bids him arise and be shriven by Genius, her priest. The idea of this shift is taken straight from the *Roman de la Rose*, but Gower twists it neatly enough into a sufficiently elastic framework for innumerable stories. The confession proceeds solemnly, book after book, through the Five Senses and the Seven Deadly Sins, and under each head Genius relates titles bearing, more or less remotely, either upon the general character of the vice under consideration or upon its particular manifestations in the affairs of love. These tales were taken from Ovid and the other repertoires of such things so popular in the Middle Ages. They are a quaint assortment. Love-Gluttony, for instance, is variously illustrated by the episodes of the Marriage of Pirithous, Galba, and Vitellius Tristram and Iseult, Dives and Lazarus, Ulysses and Telezonus, and Nectamabus of Egypt. Nearly a whole book is filled with the rambling story of Apollonius of Tyre, which afforded the subject-matter of "Pericles," and induced Shakespeare, or Shakespeare's collaborator, to pay an homage to antiquity by introducing "ancient Gower" in person upon his stage as "presenter" of the play. Gower's narrative style has perhaps suffered unduly by comparison with the "Canterbury Tales." To rank with the varied excellence of Chaucer it can make no claim, but it moves easily, with a ready flow of light octosyllabic rhythm, and though occasionally long drawn out, is not wanting in grace and freshness. Mr. Macaulay rightly dwells upon the poetical touch of such as this, which, by the way, recalls a famous passage in "Aucassin and Nicolte," from the story of Medea:

The worlde was stille on every side
With open hed and fot al bare,
Hir her to sprad she gan to fare,
Upon hir clothes gert sche was,
Al specheles and on the gras
Sche glod forth as an Addre doth:
Non otherwise sche ne goth,
Til she cam to the freisshe flod,
And there a while sche withstod.
Thries sche torned hire aboute,
And thries ek she gan doun loute
And in the flod sche wette hir her,
And thries on the water ther
Sche gaspeth with a dreechinge onde,
And tho sche tok hir speche on honde.

Nor is the framework mere framework. Even apart from the stories, the personages of the shriven lover and of the mistress of whom he speaks have their interest. The psychology—the somewhat conventional psychology—of "romantic" love is understood by Gower, and touched, as Mr. Macaulay says, "with delicacy and refinement." And there is something a little novel in the removal of this amorous idealism from the setting of romance proper to that of actual and contemporary life. The lady is human, and not a wraith of imagination, akin rather to Portia or to Clara Middleton than to Iseult or Guinevere. Pity she is nameless, this earliest of a long line of delicate portraiture!

A Bohemian Pessimist.

The Labyrinth of the World. Translated from the Bohemian of Komensky. By Count Lützow. (Swan Sonnenschein. 6s.)

In his introduction, Count Lützow says that "Komensky was overwhelmed with misery" when he sat down to write this remarkable book. And it is easy to see that the book must have been written by a man waking up from the first shock of the discovery of his illusions. Europe had already gone through five years of the Thirty Years' War, and Komensky's worldly property and his own nerves had suffered in the siege of Fulneck. His house "was pillaged and burnt down, and—to him almost a greater loss—his library and MSS. also perished in the flames." This was in 1621. Then followed two anxious years, during which Komensky, although under the protection of the Lord of Zerotin, must have become too well acquainted with all the sensations of an exile and a fugitive. And the wild Bohemian scenery of his hiding-place doubtless only quickened and troubled an imagination already troubled and quickened enough. In a hut within the borders of a great labyrinth of pine woods—probably far more labyrinthine than they are to-day—Komensky, in the bitterness of inactivity, began and finished this strange book which was destined to become a kind of second Bible for Bohemia, and is still read in the Bohemian schools. Doubtless it was the dark forest behind him which suggested the title of the book. I remember standing on the ruined citadel of Brandeis and looking across "the dolorous orlice," as Count Lützow happily describes the little river which breaks the wood, and trying to imagine the feelings of Komensky immersed in those "never-ending pine forests" to which he had fled from a wild scene of religious and political struggle. Given such conditions, it is little wonder, therefore, that the book is so full of earnestness and of passion. Moreover, Komensky was then thirty years old—that is to say, at the time of life when a man has seen enough of the world to be able to pass a judgment upon it, but has not seen enough, perhaps, to be able to make that judgment absolutely just and complete. Count Lützow, to whom English readers owe a great debt for this admirable translation, which is nothing less, although it is something more than a labour of love, tells us that Komensky described the book as a "drama," and certainly it is full enough of the drama of a confused world. But whereas it was an attempt to find "repose in the most tranquil harbour of his conscience" by one who lived through "the storms and sorrows of the sea of the world," it must be said that Komensky is much more interesting when he is describing the "sea" than when he is describing the "harbour." Count Lützow thinks that Komensky should be regarded as a "mystic," and no doubt there is a good deal of so-called "mysticism" in the closing chapters which are entitled "The Paradise of the Heart." But Komensky had too turbulent a brain to be a true mystic. The tranquillity of Eckhart, for instance, is foreign to Komensky's character. He keeps his eye too closely and too constantly on this present world, and, indeed, seems to know it through and through. But the true "mystics" hold aloof. The world's illusions, its noise, its disasters and its mockeries, these are the things which fill Komensky's mind. These feed his imagery, and sometimes his imagery is splendid. But when he moves off from the world of sight to the world of faith his imagination seems suddenly to fail him, and he becomes actually dull. At the very point where a writer like Eckhart or Madame Guyon begins to feel the stimulus of thought, Komensky draws back impoverished. Invariably he requires the excitement of sensible images and impressions, and certainly whenever he is conscious of these he expresses himself with wonderful vividness. He tells us, to be sure, that "the true Christian heedeth not the tumult of the world," but it was because he disobeyed

his own precept that he was able to write *The Labyrinth*. For it is full of the world's heat and tribulation. His "realism" is very remarkable. There is a passage entitled "The Revellers," which reminds the reader of certain parts of Plato's symposium, but it is coarser and more vivid. And since *The Labyrinth* is frankly a kind of *memoires* in which Komensky confesses that he has "mainly depicted the adventures of his own life," we almost feel tempted to believe that he may have had as many "adventures" as Saint Augustine, but was only more cautious in his account of them. At any rate, there are passages which show traces of a man who, at least in imagination, has visited most of the waste places of human psychology. There is evidence of a most restless mind, and he speaks of his own "fickleness." Like Giordano Bruno, he travelled far and wide, ran up and down Europe, and visited even England, and has left us a curious description of his "disgust at sea." The two guides who lead him through the labyrinth of the world describe him truthfully enough where they say: "We see that this fellow is restless and wishes constantly to move like quicksilver." Count Lützow has succeeded in conveying the quaint but impressive style of the original, and since the translator is not an Englishman he deserves to be sincerely congratulated on a scholarly piece of work. It must have been no easy task.

Komensky has weighed everything, but has found everything wanting. His bitterness, however, is the bitterness of a sensuous and fiery character. He has been compared to Bunyan, but he has neither the simplicity nor the innocence of Bunyan. As Count Lützow points out, Komensky, or, to give him the Latin form of his name, Comenius, was familiar with worlds of thought and problems of life and of knowledge and a range of literature which Bunyan never realised. He knew *gli errori chi serpono nella città*. He has a brain far gloomier and essentially mocking and satiric. Nothing which his two guides, Falsehood and Curiosity, point out to him in the world seems to him to be of any fundamental importance. The whole range of human exertion is condemned as so much vanity and vexation of spirit. Everywhere he expresses his huge contempt. From top to bottom he finds, he says, "fearful disorder." And then in a humorous aside he adds: "But as all this had to be called order I dared not say anything." There is, however, one charming note of pathos and regret over lost childhood and youth: "Wait, I will also show him that spot to which we shall not come afterwards. Look, then, backwards towards sunrise!" But Komensky looks for ever towards sunset and the transmutations of things. He has an extraordinary passage on Death, who goes about with a crossbow, and leads mankind "out of the world in some strange fashion." *Sic transit* written everywhere! Nothing is good enough for Komensky. He gives an unconsciously humorous account of human marriage, which seems to have increased his own sufferings, for he describes it as a very "toilsome" affair. And no form of activity appears to him to be worth the bother. Philosophers, historians, jurists and priests all come under the lash of a judgment as insolent as Carlyle's. And when he mentions "those dear Christians" it is in infinite contempt of the sects which differed from his own. As an instance of the book's vivid manner, take this sentence: "Each one struggled for a place before the seat was cold." And he thus describes a political change which had important results for his own fortunes: "Now it befell that, in my presence, a royal throne suddenly shook, broke into bits and fell to the ground." Rumour, he says, "consists entirely of mouths." And as for fame, he can say nothing strong enough in ridicule: "Then looking around, I behold painters who are sitting and gazing at these men and portraying them; then I asked: 'Why do they this?' The interpreter answered: 'That their names may

not pass away and vanish as a voice; the memory of these men will endure.' Then I gaze, and lo! each one of those who had been painted was then thrown into the abyss, just as the others; they left but the image, and that they placed on a pole, that it might be seen by all." It is all much ado about nothing, Komensky thinks. At last, weary of the whole show, he takes refuge in his own conception of the ultimate good which he discovers in the emotions of a Christian. The truth which he would appear to teach is that the search for reality must be not so much outwards as inwards. But who knows where "outward" ends and "inward" begins?

Evidently, if a mind like Komensky's keeps looking too long at the world it begins to suffer from a kind of intellectual lock-jaw. Indeed, Komensky seems to possess the secret of his spiritual troubles when he makes one of his guides say to him: "Everything is thine own fault, for thou demandest somewhat great and unusual that no man obtains." In other words, idealists have the worst time of it in this world. Komensky is ready enough with his answer to the gay guide: "Why dost thou not take into account," he asks, "the sweat, tears, groans, sickness, want, downfall and other misfortunes that I see in all the estates, countless, measureless, endless?" Even supposing, therefore, that a man's system of philosophy is only the outcome of his temperament, it is not necessarily illegitimate on that account, because the "temperament" is one of the things to be explained. It is precisely the want of correspondence between human emotion and the course of Nature that constitutes the problem of life. But Komensky has his own panacea. He proposes, as the cure of all his ills, the old-fashioned and orthodox method of "kissing" as, he says, "the rod and stick of God." This, as Count Lützow points out, is essentially Slavic. The advice is, flee from the world. It is to be a *saave qui peut*, and the buffeted traveller in *The Labyrinth*, as in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, frankly announces his determination to take refuge in flight. This is no solution, however, for the modern mind. On the contrary, the modern mind, religious as well as rationalistic, considers such a doctrine irrational. If God is to be reached, He must be got at *through* the world. A great deal of the religious faith with which we are familiar is the result of intellectual poltroonery. But a man's brain is a weapon as well as his arm or his hand, and should be used as a weapon and never sheathed and never surrendered at all. Surely there is a *noblesse oblige* of the intellect. And although the intellect may fail in its long struggle to understand the meaning of existence, yet the struggle is not quite barren because it may, it *does* succeed in creating the positive quality of spiritual valour.

BENJAMIN SWIFT.

A Book of Bitters.

Dinners and Dinners. By Lieut.-Col. Newnham-Davis. (Grant Richards. 3s. 6d.)

THERE are many possible means of stimulating the appetite for food. Some men take bitters of one kind or another, and pay penalty in the end with impaired digestion. The method is crude, expensive, and unwholesome. Others, more sensible, approach the physical appetite through the imagination, and thus attain fleshly longing by way of the intellect. Men who depend on bitters and such deleterious aids to the stimulus of the dinner gong should remember that to the healthy mind in the healthy body there is no such spur to eating as the reading about eating—if only the writer is really interested. Who, for example, could read the account of that wonderful breakfast of Amyas in *Westward Ho!* without being fired by the longing for pasties and ale after a morning plunge into the sea? But the book that stimulates to eating is—mark you—not the

cookery book, which treats, as it were, *de originibus*. There is nothing of allurements to the appetite in the details of chopped raw meat, beaten eggs, and maltreated fowls. The reader of the cookery book gains knowledge, but with knowledge comes the disillusionment of the scene-shifter at the pantomime. And cooks, as everybody knows, find difficulty in eating at all, and are, unfortunately, inclined to take it out in drink. A book about brickmaking or stone-cutting stirs in you no enthusiasm for cathedrals, and a work that enters too minutely into the prosaic origin of the daintiest of *plats* only helps to jeopardise your dinner. The present writer has been hitherto in the habit of using Mrs. Pennell's *Feasts of Autolycus* as a sort of book of bitters when appetite needs encouragement. For Mrs. Pennell deals rather with the dish made perfect, and dwells with no nauseating insistence on the steps by which perfection is reached. But her enthusiasm for the æsthetic side of a cutlet or a salad is infectious, and as you read your mouth waters. Placed in a prison library, the book would add another turn to the torturing screw of deprivation. And as you mount from dish to dish until contentment comes with coffee—in imagination, of course—you feel the exaltation which comes from the reading of stanza after stanza of some loved poet. The appetite and the intellect commingle, and eating becomes one of the fine arts.

With Lieut.-Colonel Newnham-Davis's *Dinners and Dinners* comes an alternative bitters, and in quite the most accessible shelf of at least one dressing-room it will find a place among the books which are good to read in the spare quarter of an hour which should be sacred to the cultivation of appetite. Colonel Newnham-Davis deals, as he should, with the choice and the consumption of food in its finished state rather than with the preparation of raw meats. There are one or two *recettes* given, autographed by famous *chefs*, but they may be skipped. Colonel Newnham-Davis takes London in the largest sense of the word for his topic, London as a place to dine in. Where shall I dine, and what shall I have for dinner? Now that so many people dine at large, the question must have occurred to everyone who is in the habit of dining at all. Our author has dined steadily through London, from Richmond to Greenwich. He has dined "on guard" at St. James's Palace, and he has eaten at a "Kosher" restaurant in the City, where you will find a little copy of the Ten Commandments let into the doorpost, and always he takes at least one of us with him. The host is always the same, but we vary. Now we are a young failure who wants to get into the Yeomanry, and we are dined at the St. James's for thirteen-and-six. Now we are an Eton boy, and eat bravely through a Trocadero dinner (twelve lines of print), and drink champagne, costing our host £1 18s. At other times we are Miss Dainty, or Mrs. Tota, or a maiden aunt. Once we are a Princess, whom Colonel Newnham-Davis takes appropriately to dine at Claridge's; and the bill comes to £3 12s. Were Princesses more frequent as guests than they are, one would thank the gods if, like Xerxes, they required but one meal a day.

But what of our host? What manner of man is he? Well, a good man to dine with, the reader will say. From his book it is possible to reconstruct him, or at least to gain some idea of the generous entertainer who scatters so many sovereigns that our mouths may water. He is a "man about town," with a wide nodding acquaintance; for as we wait for the soup he points out Cabinet Ministers, leaders of society, actresses, artists, and men of letters, and once we were within twenty-four hours of dining under the same roof with the then Prince of Wales. Nor is it only the great and good that we encounter, for in the American bar at the Criterion we make ocular acquaintance with bookmakers and "sports." He is also—those fifty or sixty diners excuse it—a trifle corpulent, for we are told incidentally that attendance at a levée is out of the ques-

tion until the tunic of his early manhood is replaced by something more ample. And—this is most important—he has the right way with waiters and those who direct them. If you want to dine well ask at once for the head waiter or the manager. “If you or I, in the absence of the *mâitre d’hôtel* and the head waiter, fall into the hands of an underling, heaven help us . . . The manager is the man to look for, if possible, when composing a menu. The higher you reach up that glorious scale of responsibility which runs from manager to *marmiton*, the more intelligent help you will get in ordering your dinner, the more certain you are to have an artistic meal, and not to be spending money unworthily.” Now our host has the soldier’s way with the waiter, the diplomatist’s way with the manager, and the combined ways will usually ensure a good dinner. He knows who is the *chef* here, whence he came, and whither he will probably go. He is on distantly genial terms with head waiters—who are, after all, men, and not only automatic money machines, and when he dines the Eton boy at the Trocadero, he introduces him to Mr. Lyons. The Eton boy said the dinner was jolly good. He applied the same epithets to the Empire. And finally our host takes a boyish delight in the appurtenances of feeding. His wave of the hand towards the Cupids on the ceiling, the candelabra, the flowers on the table, the dark-green panelling—that alone makes one hungry.

But London is not built for the three-guinea diner alone. And for the man who cannot afford to spend fifteen hundred a year on taking Princesses out to dinner, Colonel Newnham-Davis provides consolation. In Soho our host finds restaurants where one may eat, without sacrificing self-respect, for half-a-crown (without wine) or even eighteenpence. Of these, too, he writes with unabated enthusiasm, taking the good where he finds it. To the man who has an appetite and a few shillings in his pocket wherewith to satisfy it, Colonel Newnham-Davis supplies a valuable guide. The man who has the shillings but no appetite, ought to get an appetite by reading of dinners enjoyed.

Fine Pickings.

“THE PROSE WORKS OF JONATHAN SWIFT, D.D.” Vol. II.: *The Journal to Stella*. Edited by Frederick Ryland. (Bell & Sons.)

The Journal of Stella. Edited by G. A. Aitken. (Methuen. 6s.)

“THE relations between Mrs. Johnson and Dr. Swift have been the despair of judicious biographers,” says Mr. Ryland. They are also the despair of judicious reviewers, and we shall say nothing about them. Fascinating as literary biography is, and always will be, it is apt to be valued too much for its own sake. “Chatter about Harriet” long ago fell like a drop-scene between the public and Shelley’s writings. The Brontës have to some extent superseded their books, and stories of Rossetti have become more popular than his poetry. Much the same thing has happened with the Brownings; it is in some quarters considered more disgraceful to be ignorant of a fact in their lives than to be unread in their works. The criticism of investigation is become more common than the criticism of appreciation. That is why Mr. Herbert Paul’s recent book, *Essays in Criticism*, was so welcome, and yet so staggering, to his readers. It was based on reading, not on rooting.

Swift’s *Journal to Stella* is, of course, not to be read without due knowledge of Swift and of Stella. But the book is the thing, and the book is full of the finest pickings. It is an ideal diary, being written by a great man in an interesting age, for the eyes of a woman with whom he was in close intellectual sympathy. It gives us the

small change of Swift’s mind, with gold pieces slipping in by accident. The very buzz of court and street and coffee-house survives in these delightful pages, written every night with infinite wit and tenderness before the writer blew out his candle. It is easier to say what the *Journal* does not contain than to say what it does contain. All “Queen Anne” is here. And what tantalisations mingle with what satisfactions! “Mr. Addison and I dined together at his lodgings, and I sat with him part of this evening; and I am now come home to write an hour.” Not a word of what Addison said. Again and again he dines with Addison, at a City merchant’s, at a great lord’s, or in a hedge tavern, and somehow neglects to give us a flash of Addison’s wit. But, indeed, Swift rarely reports conversations. He showers suggestions. “I dined to-day [October 25, 1710] with Mr. Addison, Steele, and a sister of Mr. Addison, who is married to one Mons. Sartre, a Frenchman, prebendary of Westminster, who has a delicious house and garden; yet I thought it was a sort of monastic life in those cloisters, and I liked Laracor [his Irish living] better. Addison’s sister is a sort of wit, very like him. I am not fond of her.” Swift’s impatience with the declining *Tatler* extended to Steele, of whom he remarks petulantly in one place: “He is the worst company in the world till he has a bottle of wine in his head.”

Petulance lends a rare sauce to the whole of the *Journal*, for it is the petulance of the moment, and proves the sincerity and naturalness of every word. No good critic has ever hinted that the *Journal to Stella* was written for publication. “These letters of mine,” he says, “are a sort of journal where matters open by degrees; and, as I tell true or false, you will find by the event whether my intelligence be good; but I don’t care twopence whether it be or no.” A few hours later he writes: “To-day I was all about St. Paul’s, up at the top, like a fool, with Sir Andrew Fountaine and two more, and spent seven shillings for my dinner like a puppy; this is the second time he has served me so; but I will never do it again, though all mankind should persuade me; unconsidering puppies.” Swift is referring, of course, to his poverty. He rattles on:

There’s a young fellow here in town we are all fond of, and about a year or two come from the university, one Harrison, a little pretty fellow, with a great deal of wit, good sense, and good nature; has written some mighty pretty things—that in your 6th “Miscellanea,” about the Sprig of Orange, is his; he has nothing to live on but being governor to one of the Duke of Queensberry’s sons for forty pounds a year. The fine fellows are always inviting him to the tavern, and make him pay his chit. Henley is a great crony of his; they are often at the tavern at six or seven shillings reckoning, and always makes the poor lad pay his full share. A colonel and a lord were at him and me the same way to-night: I absolutely refused, and made Harrison lag behind, and persuaded him not to go to them. I tell you this because I find all rich fellows have that humour of using all people without any consideration of their fortunes; but I will see them rot before they shall serve me so. Lord Halifax is always teasing me to go down to his country house, which will cost me a guinea to his servants, and twelve shillings coach-hire, and he shall be hanged first.

Thus, hundreds of times, is a picture of the age flashed on us; and always the style is inimitably naive, jerky, rapid, and prehensile. In all the hurly-burly there are threads which we keep. The history of Swift’s excellent poem, “The Shower,” may be gathered as we go along. Thus:

Oct. 10, 1710.—I am now writing my poetical Description of a Shower in London, and will send it to the *Tatler*.

12.—I have finished my poem on the Shower all but the beginning.

13.—Looke, gentlewomen, if I write long letters I must write you news and stuff, unless I send you my verses; and some I dare not; and those on the Shower in London I have sent to the *Tatler*, and you may see them in Ireland.

17.—This day came out the *Tatler*, made up wholly of my Shower, and a preface to it. They say 'tis the best thing I ever writ, and I think so too. I suppose the Bishop of Clogher will show it you. Pray tell me how you like it.

20.—Tell me how my Shower is liked in Ireland: I never knew anything pass better here.

27.—Mr. Rowe, the poet, desired me to dine with him to-day. I went to his office (he is Under-Secretary in Mr. Addison's place that he had in England), and there was Mr. Prior; and they both fell commending my Shower beyond anything that has been written of the kind; there never was such a Shower since Danae's, etc.

Nov. 2.—Mr. Dopping (an Irish friend of Stettin's) I have seen, and he tells me coldly, my Shower is liked well enough; that is your Irish judgment.

8.—The *Tatler* upon Ithuriel's spear is not mine, madam. What a puzzle there is between you and your judgment? In general, you may be sometimes sure of things as that about Style [a *Tatler* paper written by Swift], because it is what I have frequently spoken of; but . . . I defy mankind if I please. Why, I writ a pamphlet when I was last in London, that you and a thousand have seen, and never guessed it to be mine! Could you have guessed the Shower in Town to have been mine?

10.—I dined to-day at Lady Lucy's, where they ran down my Shower.

28.—I had a letter to-day from the Bishop of Clogher. . . . He says I bid him read the London *Shaver*, and that you both [Stella and her companion, Mrs. Dingley] swore it was *Shaver*, and not Shower. You all lie, and you are puppies, and can't read Presto's [his own] hand. The Bishop is out entirely in his conjectures of my share in the *Tatler*.

30.—The Bishop of Clogher says he has seen something of mine of the same sort, better than the Shower. I suppose he means the Morning; but it is not half so good. I want your judgment of things, and not your country's.

Dec. 14.—I suppose you think it a piece of affectation in me to wish your Irish folks would not like my Shower; but you are mistaken. I should be glad to have the general applause there as I have here (though I say it), but I have only that of one or two, and therefore I would have none at all, but let you all be in the wrong. I don't know, this is not what I would say; but I am so tosticated with supper and stuff that I can't express myself.

What have we here but the very impact of an eighteenth century composition on the eighteenth century world? All through the *Journal* literature, politics, and society scintillate in little actualities which time has made precious. Consider this: "I was this morning at ten at the rehearsal of Mr. Addison's play, called 'Cato,' which is to be acted on Friday. There were not above half-a-score of us to see it. We stood on the stage, and it was foolish enough to see the actors prompted at every moment, and the poet directing them; and the drab that acts Cato's daughter [Mrs. Oldfield] out in the midst of a passionate part, and then calling out, 'What's next?'" And this picture (May 19, 1711) of a rural Chelsea in the spoiling: "Do you know that about our town we are mowing already and making hay, and it smells so sweet as we walk through the flowery meads; but the haymaking nymphs are perfect drabs, nothing so clean and pretty as further in the country. There is a mighty increase of dirty wenches in straw hats since I knew London."

It would be invidious to compare the two editions of the *Journal* before us. Messrs. Bell's takes its place in a complete edition of Swift's works, which is itself conditioned by the Bohn Library, to which it belongs. Mr. Lecky's

general introduction to the set, printed in the first volume, is of great value. Messrs. Methuen's edition is a separate publication, and it has the advantage of annotation by a critic, who, already in his edition of Defoe's works, and in his life of Steele, has proved himself one of the keenest and most accurate explorers of the eighteenth century.

Poems of a Novelist

Selections from the Poems of S. Weir Mitchell, M.D., LL.D., Edinburgh. (Macmillan. 5s. net.)

THESE poems, selected (we are told) from eight thin volumes published between 1886 and 1889, represent the excursions into verse of an American novelist, whose reputation has been deservedly won by much ability. The volume has considerable merit and attraction: yet it must be said that Dr. Weir Mitchell shows conclusively that he is no poet. He lacks quintessential emotion, he has not the lyric touch, even his thought (and the verse is thoughtful) is not beyond the compass of the average cultured and reflective mind, and there is a conspicuous lack of metrical ease and felicity. He does not take naturally to metre, but moves (so to speak) like a conscientiously trained swimmer; his work is wrought into verse instead of creating verse by its own impulse. The chief exception to these strictures is the opening "Ode on a Lycian Tomb," and even that transcends his wonted level only in the first three stanzas. It is too long; he has outlasted the inspiration which bore him safely over the commencement. There he had the advantage of Keats's example, and this derivative impulse gives an alien nobility to the stanzas, which ceases when the external guidance fails. It is the idea of the "Ode to a Grecian Urn" reapplied to a new yet kindred theme, which carries off those first three stanzas; and the diction, the style, derive from the same source. But the idea is well reapplied, the style well copied. The "tomb" in question bears (as a foot-note tells us) one female figure in eighteen attitudes of grief, separated by Doric columns. Thus the poem opens:

What gracious nunnery of grief is here!
One woman garbed in sorrow's every mood;
Each sad presentment celled apart, in fear
Lest that herself upon herself intrude
And break some tender dream of sorrow's day,
Here cloistered lonely, set in marble gray.
O, pale procession of immortal love,
For ever married to immortal grief!
All life's high-passioned sorrow far above,
Past help of time's compassionate relief:
These changeless stones are treasuries of regret
And mock the term by time for sorrow set.
Ah me! what tired hearts have hither come
To weep with thee, and give thy grief a voice;
And such as have not added to life's sum
The count of loss, they who do still rejoice
In love which time yet leaveth unassailed,
Here tremble, by prophetic sadness paled.

That is very felicitous. The fourth line of the first stanza, the first two, the fourth, and the last of the second stanza, are quite memorable, and of high poetic quality. Were they unimitative, without a model, they would suggest great ideas of Dr. Mitchell's power: even as it is, were such a note, or anything approaching it, sustained through any considerable portion of the volume, we could never have made the pronouncement with which we started this review. But they disappear with the turning of the page, to reappear no more throughout the book. Nor is anything to be found there at all on a level with them, though (it might be) in another kind. The rest is hard, and not anyway "high-passioned"—in Dr. Mitchell's Keatsian phrase.

Yet we have said the book shows ability, and has in-

tere.t. Its ability is precisely in the kind where the author can get near the art of the novelist; and in proportion as he recedes from that art he fails. It is in the dramatic monologues or narratives, and above all in the actual dramatic pieces, short though they be. They have nothing of poetical quality, neither imagination nor imagery, so far as diction is concerned; their imagination lies purely in construction and characterisation.

"François Villon" is notable for its resemblance in plot to a celebrated play of the present day (Dr. Mitchell being prior, we conclude, in publication), "*Cyrano de Bergerac*." It is not a play, but a narrative, in form of a dramatic duologue. The plot, as in M. Rostand's well-known drama, turns on a man wooing his mistress through the medium of another. But in Dr. Mitchell's poem it is done through the medium of verses supplied by the other man—no less a person than the poet Villon. The lady, after marriage, discovers the cheat, and declares her love due to the poet, not his employer; with the ultimate result of a duel, when Villon is found serenading under her window. She kisses his dead face, after her husband has run him through the body. It is well told, though essentially after the fashion of the novelist rather than of the poet. One of the few poetic touches is when the noble husband, finding his wife has become alienated from him, yet not guessing the reason, applies to the peasant rhymist to furnish him verses which shall renew her love, as verses won it; and is mockingly refused. The thing is impossible, says Villon, and chalks up drunkenly on the tavern wall:

If God love to a sexton gave,
Surely he would dig it a grave;
If God fitted an ass with wings,
What would he do with the pretty things?

It is a pretty epigram on the uselessness of verse to the illiterate noble, or of gained love to the man incapable of retaining it.

But the best thing in the book is the short dramatic piece, "*Francis Drake*." The author has wisely thrown aside all endeavour to make it an acting drama, a play: it is a less possible stage-piece than "*Pippa Passes*." No stage—hardly the Elizabethan, with its splendid independence of scenery—could represent its shifting and difficult scenes, passing from ship to boat and ship's side; nay, involving the transit of a boat from one ship's side to another. But it is truly dramatic in the reading, and deals with a remarkably interesting story. It is the narrative of how, in the expedition against Panama, Drake's trusted friend, Thomas Doughty, played traitor to him, being won over by Burleigh, before the voyage started, to thwart the scheme, lest it should provoke Spain to open declaration of war. Consequently, when the fleet is delayed for a time by contrary weather in the Straits of Magellan, he incites the seamen and the gentlemen adventurers to mutiny, and compel the return of the fleet to England. Doughty is the real hero of the drama. He is represented (in accordance with history) as a singularly fascinating personage—scholar, soldier, fearless, and with a genius for making friends, which he uses in pursuit of his design. Discovered by Drake, Drake for a time is lenient with him, but at last is compelled to arrest him, and, after due trial, sentence him to death. Under the sentence of death, the singular qualities of the man come out. In sight of the block, he takes the Sacrament with Drake, and banquets gaily with him and his former friends, taking final leave as though he were but going on a journey. All this is historical: but Dr. Mitchell's art appears by the manner in which he makes credible and visible the man's fascination and courage, despite the treachery of his design. Our sole objection to an otherwise most interesting little dramatic piece is that Dr. Mitchell is no humorist. Vicary, the Mercutio of the piece, "jokes wi' deeficulty." An interesting book: though scarce the work of a poet.

Other New Books.

"TWIXT SIRDAR AND MENELIK.

By CAPT. M. S. WELLBY.

Gradually we are getting light thrown on the mysterious country which lies on the borders of Abyssinia and the Soudan. It is one of the few districts which has not been run over by tourists and sportsmen, and the men who penetrate into it can still claim to be looked upon as pioneers. Captain Wellby, the author of the latest book on the country, was a young officer of the 18th Hussars, who, in August 1898, joined Lieutenant-Colonel Harrington at Harrar, and journeyed with the British Agent to Menelik's Court at Addis Adebä. He was fortunate enough to ingratiate himself with the Abyssinian Sovereign, and obtained leave to travel through every part of the country. So, in December, 1898, he started, without any white companion, through the unknown parts of Abyssinia, and through the "devil-infested country of Walamo," as far as Lake Rudolf. He passed round south of the great lake, and then turning north, followed the river Ruzi from its source to where it runs into the Sobat at Nasser, and so on to Khartoum, and down the Nile to Cairo. A glance at the map will show the extent and value of the journey, and the easy and unaffected style in which Captain Wellby tells of his wanderings with a caravan of natives makes the book a fascinating one, even for the general and ungeographical reader. On its value to the student of the interior of Africa there is no need to insist; it is a work which will well repay careful study.

Of Harrar, that important town which should now be under the Union Jack were it not for the limpness which characterises all our dealings abroad, Captain Wellby says: "Anybody who pays Harrar a visit will wonder why the place was ever allowed to slip from our hands, for it is an important district, both commercially and strategically; and as soon as the Abyssinians come to a reasonable understanding, and have more direct dealings with Europeans, its value is bound to increase tenfold." We have allowed this valuable centre of the trade of North-east Africa to pass into the hands of Menelik, and we must now do the best we can to see that the trade does not pass into other hands. The people eagerly inquired why the English did nothing to help the inhabitants of Hargeisa by constructing a line from Berbera to Harrar. King Menelik, it appears, has strict ideas of Court dress where Europeans are concerned, and Captain Wellby tells a pleasant little story of Prince Henry of Orleans, who went into the presence of the King attired in shooting costume. It appears that dress-clothes are what the Abyssinian monarch considers fitting for his dignity, and so he remarked, sternly, when he saw the descendant of the kings of France: "Who is this person who does not know how to appear before a king?" Captain Wellby arrived at Omdurman, after his adventurous journey, in the July following the great battle which broke the power of the Dervishes, and soon afterwards rejoined his regiment in South Africa. He arrived at Ladysmith just before the investment, and went all through the siege. Just a year ago, he was seriously wounded in a skirmish with the Boers, and died at Paardekop, on August 5, 1900. Those who read his book will feel the loss as that of a personal friend, so charming is the character which is expressed in every page of the work. Dog lovers, too, will note, with regret, that the author's little fox-terrier, "Lady," which went through all the journey, was lost in the Soudan between Atbara and Khartoum. (Harper's. 16s.)

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SYDNEY SMITH.

By S. J. REID.

We cordially welcome this cheap edition of a biography, the four editions of which bear testimony to its interest and value. Intended not to rival, but to supplement the biography of Sydney Smith by his daughter, Lady

Holland, in effect it furnishes a mass of new information, anecdotes, letters, etc., which greatly extends our knowledge of the famous and witty parson, whose reputation in London society and personal intercourse exceeds the actual value of his necessarily ephemeral literary remains, though we are far from underrating the value which his genius has stamped even on these. They are ephemeral only as regards subject and object. Mr. Reid has enjoyed special advantages in the help of Sydney Smith's descendants and all who could furnish fresh light, details, and letters; and he has set the man in his *milieu*, sketching in the brilliant group, or rather groups, of contemporaries who act as reflecting mirrors to set off his own fascinating personality. The result is a book interesting to the last page. For wit and humour are not merely among the most immortal of things; they are of universal appeal, which cannot be said of poetry, philosophy, eloquence, or even novel-writing, apart from the ingredient of humour. (Sampson Low.)

SPRINGTIME IN THE BASQUE
MOUNTAINS.

BY ARTHUR
LASENBY LIBERTY.

As a drill-ground for students of the gentle art of skipping this book is a success. On the second page of the narrative we have a foot-note authorising the reader to jump forward to page 49, "for even the author realises that Part I. is uninteresting." We gladly accepted the privilege, but it was only to find ourselves immersed deeper in the small beer of travel. Of our own motion we leaped to page 149, and then to 249, but although here and there the narrative is crisper, we found it insufferably tedious in the mass. Letters written home by an ordinary pen, and then printed end on end in a book, even when "prepared for the press," do not make literature. This book contains scores and scores of passages like the following:

We agreed that the path must lead ultimately into the worn track we had followed for so long last evening, which surmise proved correct. Then once again we stood at the self-same meeting of the ways where we had lingered in the twilight to admire the scenery around the Pas de Rolande. But we found three ways met here instead of two, and, further, that we had failed last evening to notice the one by which we had mounted up so easily to-day. In the broad daylight we felt quite clever and superior people, and benignly pitied the follies of the "Pilgrims of the Night."

Mr. Liberty spares us no detail or *cliché*.

To do him justice, he offers his text as an environment to the photographs taken by Mrs. Liberty. Many of these are charming, and they are admirably printed. (Grant Richards. 12s.)

In *Twenty Thousand Miles of Road Travel in Central and Western Europe*, Mr. W. J. A. Stamer essays to write not a simple book of travels, but "a treatise on men and manners, on foreigners and foreign things," and, among other things, to tell us why we English are so hated on the Continent. Mr. Stamer expresses his opinions freely and naturally, and that is the chief merit of his book. His opinions are rather breezy than subtle, and he has much scorn for English husbands and wives, and the London Sunday. The book is certainly not a treatise, but a medley—the medley, however, of one who has travelled far and observed with some care. It will interest those who have travelled in Italy, France, and Germany, as a budget of impressions by a talkative and resourceful traveller over the same ground. (Chapman and Hall. 12s.)

Messrs. Cassell have now issued their serial *History of the Boer War* in a stout volume. It has the characteristic merits of "Belle Sauvage" publications, and at seven-and-sixpence is generous value for money.

Fiction.

The Serious Wooing: a Heart's History. By John
Oliver Hobbes. (Methuen. 6s.)

THE morals and customs of certain smart sets of modern society are not edifying, but they are part of the social fabric of our time, and in this, her new novel of manners, Mrs. Craigie has caught them on the wing. She uses the novelist's right to choose the material that suits the planned purpose: hence this clever picture of the unmoral, selfish, indulgent days of such a family as the Ragots. The mother, Lady Ragot, "who looked like a very pretty doll who had, by some accident, got wrinkled," was daughter of the twelfth Baron Dundrum, and widow of the late Sir Algernon Ragot, Baronet, formerly of Holt Park, Suffolk. To her were born three daughters and a son, and the second daughter was Rosabel, who had been married at sixteen—"it was all mamma's doing"—to an imbecile peer. "Shortclough was a *célin* from the beginning," says Archie Wardle. "I can see him now as he looked on their wedding-day—his swivel eye rolling horribly, and that wobbly under-lip turned down as far as the chin-line." It is to narrate the great episode in the life of the pretty, attractive Countess of Shortclough that Mrs. Craigie has evolved this sparkling background of smart folk. Rosabel is of them, but in her emotional, undisciplined way, she has the desire to escape, to live the life that her inarticulate soul dimly cries for. She is a rebel against her set, fancying that she wants, under her lover's influence, "to work among the poor, and give up the old, frivolous business." She is, at any rate, capable of one thing—a great passion; and to that, so far as this book goes, she is faithful—splendidly faithful. For Jocelyn Luttrell (a Socialist, with three hundred thousand pounds, who gives it all away to his Cause with a stroke of the pen) she defies her world, going away with him, while her husband is still living, but returning, the next morning, when she learns, through her brother, that her flight will jeopardise her young sister's marriage to the Duke of Beauleigh. Through the lies and deceptions of her relatives she is led to believe that Luttrell has forsaken her, and they force her into a marriage with Lord Wroxall, an elderly, faithful admirer. Finally discovering the conspiracy against Luttrell, who has been true to her all through, she leaves her second husband to follow Luttrell, "poverty stricken, through Europe."

Students of fiction in years to come will have no difficulty in placing the period of this book. There are allusions to the opening of Parliament, to "San Toy," to Bennett the murderer, to Anatole France's *M. Bergeret à Paris*, to Mrs. Botha, and to pictures by Lenbach, Sargent, and Constant. Here is the Constant picture of Rosabel:

She sits, queenly, on a Byzantine throne: there is a sort of heavenly rhetoric about the whole composition: the famous chestnut hair is more sunny than her blazing diadem: her cheeks declare with brilliance, that errors of the blood, not of the mind, might drive the most rare creature to heroism: the proud nostrils all but quiver with the fervour of a pink, celestial thought or two: it is not lifelike, but it is marvellously suggestive of womanhood dressed for conquest, for tragedy, or for a family gallery of painted ancestors—some by right of adventure.

The subsidiary characters are convincingly sketched in. Susie, "who was watching them both with a young girl's half-devising blindness—a thing truer in its judgments than the long experience of human folly can warrant." Miss Luttrell, "spare, with a fine gaunt chest, plunging black eyes, and no nonsense discernible about the knees." Huxter, who "made splendid salmon-flies, wrote for the *Field*, and was a country squire of perfect breeding, small means, and scholarly tastes." Mr. Odo Ceppel, who remarked, "Do not use expressions which you cannot understand. Do I have temptations? Certainly not. People

who conduct themselves properly do not know what the word means." It was this gentleman, her brother-in-law, of whom Rosabel said: "If they would only make mutton and mashed potatoes expensive, dear Odo would get perfectly well." Father Stonyhurst, the Jesuit priest, is quite a refreshment in this company of worldlings, who never "mis-read a letter, undervalued a favour, overdid a kindness, neglected a rising power, or dropped too hurriedly a falling one."

As he [the Jesuit Priest] had spent his own life learning how to die, it always seemed a little astonishing to him, in spite of his great experience as a Director of consciences, that men should be so eager to extract every possibility, as quickly as possible, from existence, and cling to it, and pray to have it prolonged, and love it—even in circumstances when it seemed to offer nothing except pain and disappointments.

The story is told with all the wit and the power of characterisation that Mrs. Craigie has at command. Satire is abundant, and the falseness, the meanness, the pettiness of the men and women who compose the Ragot smart set, are revealed with an infinity of small touches, and a ripple of good-humoured contempt, that produces all the effect the author intended. Her world took Rosabel's flight with pleasant cynicism. It was all part of the game, and her nearest and dearest condemned chiefly Rosabel's imprudence. It would have been so easy, one whispered, to arrange matters with this importunate lover, even after her second marriage. The Dowager Duchess of Beaulleigh declared that there was something to be said for her. "She herself never said that something, but one of her glances went a long way." Rosabel suffered from her bringing up. In her heart this pretty sport of Passion despised her set. Life with her lover, so she thought, had an intention and some meaning; "without him it looked forlorn, contemptible enough, and base." It is significant of the times, this picture of a society without religion, obeying no law except prudence, regarding, with amused tolerance and contempt for its very frankness, the action of one of their number who thought their world well lost for love. Rosabel enlists our sympathy. She at least had the courage to be loyal to a great passion.

Notes on Novels.

[These notes on the Week's Fiction are not necessarily final.
Reviews of a selection will follow.]

LA BELLA, AND OTHERS.

By EGERTON CASTLE.

Eight spirited short stories, "originally published elsewhere," by the author of *Young April*. They are divided into four sections: "Clank of Steel," "Silhouettes," "Temptations," and "Rococo." The third paragraph of the dedication, which is to Walter Herries Pollock, runs: "In my younger days of literary bashfulness, you were the first expert to give me that word of quiet approval which was 'sufficient and necessary' to keep me going on a new and pleasing pursuit." (Macmillan. 3s. 6d.)

LOVE AND THE MASK.

By MENÉ MURIEL DOWIE.

This well-written and entertaining novel, by the author of *Gallia* and *The Crook of the Bough*, has for background the heavy clouds of the Boer War in its early stages. Not so much the actual fighting, as its effect upon those who stayed at home, and waited. It is mainly an analysis of the emotional life of Leslie Rose, the heroine. "Life baffled her, as it does most women; the closer they get to grips with it, the more unmanageable does it become. . . . A mad mistake to be awake, to be twenty-seven, to be beautiful, to have thought things out, and to want—well, for lack of a word, Leslie called it 'everything.'" (Heinemann. 6s.)

MARY HAMILTON.

By LORD ERNEST HAMILTON

A romance of the days of Mary, Queen of Scots. "Being the chronicles of Anne Cunninghamne, sometime waiting woman and humble friend to that most sweet and lovely lady." "Mary Hamilton was twelve years old when I was first sent for to Andrew's Knowes, I being at that time sixteen. . . . She was tall for a woman, though not within an inch of my own great height, and as straight and upright as a ship's mast." (Methuen. 6s.)

MISTRESS NELL.

By G. C. HAZELTON, JUN.

"It is the vogue," says Mr. Hazelton in a foreword, "to dramatise successful novels." The author of the present Nell Gwyn story has pursued the contrary course. His "merry" play of the same name was written and produced before he undertook to compose this tale, suggested by the same historic sources. (Murray. 3s. 6d.)

BOTH SIDES OF THE VEIL.

By RICHARD MARSH.

Eleven stories dealing, in Mr. Marsh's "well-known manner," with matters "human and superhuman." They are all readable. Mr. Marsh's superhumanity is genial rather than creepy, and when he has a story to tell he begins right away, as: "It was beastly weather," or "Directly I entered Walter's room I perceived that there was something the matter." (Methuen. 6s.)

HENRY BOURLAND.

By A. E. HANCOCK.

From America. It begins: "Before daybreak, on the 12th of April, 1861, the hush of Nature's peace brooded over the fair lands of Virginia." In a foreword the author says: "This book is an endeavour by one bred in the North to write sympathetically the annals of a Virginia family. . . . In one sense the narrative is fiction; but in another and truer sense, for most of the incidents have warrant in fact, it is a history of general conditions turned into the concrete." (Macmillan. 6s.)

THE LITTLE TIN GODS.

By JESSIE E. LIVESAY.

A cleverly entitled story, into which we dip and read: "Sometimes I am sorely tempted to throw up the sponge, and sink to the level of the shopkeepers; for the hall-mark seems to stick to me, I can't get rid of it. Why, oh why, were our pickles so largely advertised?" cried Lady Perry, throwing up her hands in despair." (Hurst and Blackett. 6s.)

DOL SHACKLEFIELD.

By HEBER K. DANIELS.

A melo-dramatic police story, in which the heroine performs much racing and chasing, and private detecting, and hiding and standing at bay. All written rather breathlessly, with great use of the dash. (F. V. White. 6s.)

THE SEVEN HOUSES.

By HAMILTON DRUMMOND.

A French historical romance by the author of *For the Religion*. "In his padded settle by the gaping western hearth of the great hall sat Guy de Lheac, Seigneur of that name, and seventh Suzerain in direct succession. . . . 'What news, brother?' cried the Seigneur, rising to meet his fellow-shadow half way? 'Is the pother ended? By the saints! but this coming into the world is a plaguey slow business.'" (Ward, Lock. 6s.)

THE THIRTEEN EVENINGS.

By GEORGE BARTRAM.

The evenings were spent in the smoking-room of the Boomerang Club, where the members took it in turns to narrate strange experiences. They were a travelled lot, learned in strange by-ways of life, and they talked of hypnotism, the mysteries of Obi, "the freaks of modern Corinthianism," Vampires, and so on. (Methuen. 6s.)

THE ACADEMY.

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Art and Life.

ART, though in its cruder forms it seems to pervade life, is artificial and negligible. It is the embroidery on the coverlet that keeps us warm at night. We are happier with it, but we could be happy without it. A man may say that an appreciation of the classics alone makes life tolerable to him, but put him in an ice-house with Homer, and tell him that he may emerge only on condition of leaving Homer for ever behind, and he will leave Homer for ever behind. Life is, indeed, constantly and rudely reminding us that art is a mere game of make-believe, a diversion and a solace to be employed in the moments when life is a little less business-like than usual. We don't turn to *Adonais* while our friend is dying, but only when he is dead and there is nothing else to do. When life chooses to become intense, art is nowhere, neglected like a mistress in the wars, forgotten like a fable. The toothache will annihilate Beethoven's C minor symphony. Art is a very little thing, and only by borrowing some of the greatness of life can it become great. All the great works of art have simple, primitive, elemental themes, and achieve their greatness as much by their themes as by their execution. What shall be said, then, of the art which, avoiding the grand and permanent simplicities of life, turns for its theme to art itself, seeking to artificialise the artificial, to build a convention on a convention, to embroider the embroidery?

We have been led to this consideration, and to the somewhat facile pomposity of our title, by the perusal of a little book of admirable tales called *Crucial Instances* (Murray) by a novelist who truly deserves that often misapplied epithet, "distinguished"—Edith Wharton. Mrs. Wharton persistently does her best work in writing about art, artists, and the other people who make of art their chief pre-occupation. And, though she not improbably is unaware of her limitation—since she gives prominence in this book to the conspicuous failures of it, her fine and rare talent is quite confined to that narrow circle of artificiality which is called art. Of the seven stories, two are about authors, two are about pictures, one is about a painter, and the remaining two alone—the first and the last—deal with sheer stark life. These latter are both concerned with adultery. One is a flat, painstaking recital of a nineteenth century Italian melodrama. The other is a mediæval legend closely resembling the most famous of all Balzac's short stories, told in a manner which would fain be Balzacian, but is not. Here we are sorrowfully compelled to listen to the strident shouting, over the bleak ways of life, of a voice which, in the close air of the studio, can be full of subtle significance and quiet impressiveness. We guess that the author means to strike us down by imaginative force, but all we are conscious of is a futile beating of the air with violent similes.

Cypresses that cut the shunshine like basalt shafts,
 Maimed statues stretched their arms like rows of whining beggars,

A heavy door behind which the cold lurked like a knife,
 A quibbling mouth that would have snapped at verbal errors like a lizard catching flies,

Lizards shot out of the cracked soil like flames,
 White domes and roofs flashed like a smile.

Not thus, by the reiteration of *likes*, by the machinery of bizzare comparisons, is the tragic atmosphere to be created, but rather by simple and direct fervency of statement.

This done, he went on shipboard, and is now
 A Seaman, a gray-headed Mariner.

There is tragedy, haunting and profound, got by the simple directness of Wordsworth's art, which suited the simple directness of his theme. But it is a proviso of Mrs. Wharton's gift that she cannot be direct. Her force curiously depends on its obliquity. She can only arrive at her destination by going somewhere else. She can only describe one thing by describing another. She is bound to talk the delicate and dulcet language of hints which Mr. Henry James and herself have perfected. And so she fails whenever her theme demands singleness, simplicity, naïveté. But when she leaves the few simple passions and desires of which real essential life is made, and comes to the unreal bewildering overlay of conventions which the leisured classes have constructed for themselves, and whose "complexity" they bewail, then she is at home; then she can be herself; then she can point at a truth with her elbow while looking the other way, convey a statement of fact while uttering the exact opposite, and generally achieve the highest virtuosity of fencing. One tale in this book, "The Recovery," is a little masterpiece; we say a little one. It is about an American citizen, who, by means of an instrument made for that purpose, daubed coloured pigments on oblong pieces of canvas in a particular way. He thought that no one had ever daubed with such skill as himself. But he had not been to Europe, where this craft of daubing had been carried on for hundreds of years. A female admirer arranged for a number of his oblong pieces of daubed canvas to be hung on the walls of a room in Paris, where people could see them. The American citizen also came to Paris. The exhibition of his canvasses was not a failure, but he discovered, to his horror, that the European daubers had daubed in a different style from himself, and a better. For hours he was in despair, and then suddenly he resolved to learn the European method of daubing. And that is all. No question of love, hunger, pain, death; but merely this question of how to daub, which all the characters take seriously, as if it really mattered. And yet a masterpiece, though a little one. The extraordinary jargon of the inhabitants of that world where daubing is done, and when done is discussed, is rendered with a fidelity that will charm the initiate.

"He's too impossible!" cried Mrs. Davant, sweeping her at once into the central current of her grievance.

Claudia looked from one to the other.

"For not going to see you?"

"For not going to see his pictures!" cried the other nobly.

"I can't make her understand," he said, turning to his wife.

"I don't care about myself!" Mrs. Davant interjected.

What would the man who sowed the wheat that made the bread that these people ate make out of this intercommunication of souls? Might he not excusably remark, as the navy remarked to the Oxford House young man, "H—ll and thunder——"? And yet *we* understand it, appreciate it; and we who can breathe the atmosphere of studios without inconvenience are apt to say that it is none the less clever, exact, truthful, subtle, because only a few persons can make head or tail of it. We can perceive, too, the fine satire of such a stroke as this in the delineation of the hero (What a hero!): "Keniston to his other claims to distinction added that of being hard to know. His friends always hastened to announce the fact to strangers—adding, after a pause of suspense, that they 'would see what they could do.' Visitors in whose favour he was induced to make an exception were further warned

that he never spoke unless he was interested, so that they mustn't mind if he remained silent." We can perceive the wonderfulness of the faculty disclosed in this truly brilliant *aperçu* of Paris:

Claudia . . . turned aimlessly into the wide whirling brightness of the streets. Never had she felt more isolated amid that ordered beauty which gives a social quality to the very stones and mortar of Paris. All about her were evidences of an artistic sensibility, pervading every form of life like the nervous structure of the huge frame—a sensibility so delicate, alert, and universal that it seemed to leave no room for obtuseness or error. In such a medium the faculty of plastic expression must develop as unconsciously as any organ in its normal surroundings; to be "artistic" must cease to be an attitude and become a natural function. To Claudia the significance of the whole vast revelation was centred in the light it shed on one tiny spot of consciousness—the value of her husband's work.

Take the story as a whole, take all the five stories, was the achievement worth achieving? We think so. There must be little art, as well as great art. But—and this is the moral we wish to inculcate—the little art is very little, very limited in its scope, its power, its appeal. The besetting danger of the time is, in art, to confuse the fine and subtle, the highly conventionalised, with the supreme elemental. No good quality can atone for the absence of the elemental. Art is not elemental—never will be nor can be. The moment it ceases to be an "attitude" towards life, it will cease to be art. And the artists of to-day are more and more prone to discuss themselves, to find their themes in their own artificial problems. The artists of the golden ages never did so. It is a sign of decadence, this pre-occupation with the inessential. But we are as we are, planted here by a power beyond the ken of art. If the age be decadent, we can help it no more than an old man can help being old. To the decadent age, a decadent literature. Let us make it as excellent as we can, and enjoy it as bravely as we can. But let us not lose our perspective, nor lower our ideals. Let us especially not miss the distinction between fine and great. We who write have a sincere admiration for Mrs. Wharton's original and delicate talent; we have felt the temptation to give it all sorts of beautiful names; it suits us and our time; it is of the hour. But when we turn, for instance, to the poem whose last lines we have quoted above, we grow absurdly conscious of the instability of the whole Wharton fabric.

Things Seen.

The Cornfield.

It stretched down the broad hill-slope, reaching almost to the station-yard, and as I waited on the little platform I thanked the good fortune that set its swaying yellow expanse before my town-tired eyes. A fussy engine tugged away at some trucks back in the siding, between whose metals ox-eyed daisies and meadow grasses grew. Geraniums blazed about a railway carriage that had evidently retired from active service to do duty as a lamp-shed. London was a hundred or more miles distant. I awaited my train contentedly! The cornfield dominated the landscape; every way I looked my eyes came back inevitably to that ripening stretch of wheat, deep amber in the very heart of the land. A small party of prospective travellers joined me on the platform. They were a friendly trio. The matron was young and comely, with small, kindly eyes and ruddy cheeks, the little girls owned shining ringlets with tips still damp from the brush, and their clean starched frocks stuck out stiffly at an acute angle, and crackled with every movement like a brown-paper parcel. Excitement plainly simmered very near the surface. "Tü Lunnon? Ess, zur, me cousin hev alwez

a-promised us. Doin' mortal well hisself, conductor o' a tram out Camberwell way, went from these parts fifteen years ago w'out ten shillin' tū 'ees name. The maidens be jest crazy tū zee all ez they hev heerd on, the waxworks an' the Crystal Palace, brave fine chance fer us, I reckon!" The owners of the crisp skirts executed a war-dance of expectancy at the conjured delights, while the mother mopped her perspiring brow. "You will find London a little warm, just now?" I hazarded. "Bless'ee, country-volk dawnt take no 'eed o' the weather, when they goes 'olidayin', no vay!" I assisted in the conveying of the bundles and the little people into the train, and as they departed I reflected that the ideal holiday for some is Camberwell, for others cornfields; personally, I am for cornfields.

The Unities.

PATIENTLY I waited on the outer step of a bonnet shop in Bond-street. As the roadway traffic broke for a moment there crossed by the refuge over against me a vision in chiffon, fluff, feathers—all the luxuries of the season. Stepping off the refuge she stopped, and with the interrogation point of an expensive toe, turned over something which lay in the road. It was a silver-mounted driving whip. I saw her difficulty, which cost her but a moment's hesitation. She did the only possible thing and passed on, with the slightest shadow of regret on her well-bred face. It looked a very nice whip. But while I hesitated, even before the roadway traffic had resumed its attack, a young man, immaculate, shiny, correct, stepped from the refuge. He, too, hesitated as he saw the whip; turned it over with his umbrella, stooped, picked it up, and deposited it by the kerb. As he lifted his head our eyes met, and it flashed across me that the lady's difficulty and his difficulty would be mine. How could I combine a frock-coat, a silk hat, an umbrella and a driving-whip in a walk down Bond-street? And as I considered, with the whip lying at my feet, a boy with a slab of fish on his shoulder came along. He did not hesitate, or even abate his leisurely pace. In a moment the silver-mounted whip was swinging in his hand and he went on whistling gaily at the unities.

All Jewry.

To the Gentile first and afterward to the Jew, this has been the sequence in the matter of Encyclopedias. But now *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (Funk and Wagnalls Co., New York) has begun to be born. When we look at its first volume, the first of twelve (how could they be other than twelve?) and see its bulk, its beauty of typography and illustrations, its immense list of contributors, in all countries, its incalculable erudition; and when we contemplate the cost of the whole work, which must exceed half-a-million dollars; we are moved to compare Dr. Isidore Singer, its editor, with Nehemiah. Five years ago Dr. Singer, a graduate of the University of Vienna, could speak hardly a dozen words of English. Yet the idea of a great Jewish Encyclopedia, printed in the most widely spoken language on earth, had taken possession of this obscure student. Assuredly he must have known something of the emotions that filled Nehemiah when he had conceived the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem:

Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned.

And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work.

Even when Dr. Singer had told his plans to the priests,

the nobles, and the rulers, he had still to tell it to the publishers, and here, again, his case resembled Nehemiah's. The publishers of Germany and France were cold to him; not one could see his way to an enterprise of this magnitude:

When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do?

True, the German publisher, Brockhaus, did not laugh, but he asked for guarantees which could not be given. In France the Anti-Semitic wave and the Dreyfus case rendered the search for a publisher hopeless. Then the venerable Zadok Kahn, chief rabbi of France, advised the young man to go west. He crossed the Atlantic, and, paying no duty on his idea, melted—a solitary figure in a black coat—into the crowds of Broadway. Publishers received a card, saw a man, and heard a great idea expounded in broken English with an Austrian Jewish accent. It was impossible that the young Encyclopedist should have made an impressive figure, and after some flurry and hustle he invariably found himself in the street. It was in the street that his eye fell on a street-car advertisement of the *Standard Dictionary*. Arguing that the publishers of such a work must be of the right stamp, our young Nehemiah went to see Funk and Wagnalls. There appear to be five members of this firm; their portraits are arranged pattern-wise on page 7 of the illustrated prospectus of the *Encyclopedia*. A set of stern, smart faces. These men needed to be convinced, and they were convinced:

Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests, and they builded the sheep-gate; they sanctified it, and set up the doors of it; even unto the tower of Meah they sanctified it, unto the tower of Hananeel.

And, as usual, the sheep were easily led through the sheep-gate. The vast scheme took shape and parts. Very soon a huge organisation was in working order. No fewer than four hundred scholars, all versed in Jewish lore, have agreed to write for the *Encyclopedia*. In Vienna, in Paris, in St. Petersburg, in London, they are even now corrugating their brows over MSS. and papyri, and writing their articles to be ready by given dates. In New York there is a Board of Consulting Editors. Abroad, there is a Foreign Board of Consulting Editors. Their cultured Hebrew faces, as portrayed by photo-process, are a study. And the portraits of the eager men and women who form the sub-editorial, art, proof-reading, and stenographic staffs convey, as nothing else could, an idea of the magnitude of the machine which Dr. Singer has set in motion. The *facsimiles* of MSS., galley proofs, and what not, repeat the tale. It is the Jewish genius for co-operation over again. The Funk and Wagnalls sheep-gate was but the beginning:

Next unto them builded the men of Jericho. And next to them builded Zaccur the son of Imri.

But the fish-gate did the sons of Hassenaah build, who also laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

And next unto them repaired Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of Koz. And next unto them repaired Meshullam the son of Berechiah the son of Meshezabeel. And next unto them repaired Zadok the son of Baana. And next unto them the Tekoites repaired, etc.

And so, working next and with each other, Dr. Singer's cohort of scholars may be trusted to bring their *magnum opus* to a symmetrical conclusion.

In the presence even of the first volume one's feeling with regard to this work is one of awe. What a gathering together of the attributes of this marvellous race, in whose eight million living souls are represented nearly all man's experience and skill and learning and memory and wisdom and suffering. One feels all this in the trifles, the chance

entries, on which a roving and bewildered eye pauses. The obscure biographies of rabbis, amoraim, copyists, Talmudists, bookmen, and merchants, in lands and cities remote, produce a powerful effect. Dip where you will and learn what was done or said by Cohen Abigdor, the learned and wealthy rabbi of Ferrara, in the middle of the fifteenth century, or by Joseph Ben Isaac Ben Stans Ibn Abitur, who, "according to one of Abitur's own acrostic poems," was born in Merida, about the beginning of the century, when England was ripening for the Norman invasion. Have you yet sufficiently acquainted yourself with the works of that eminent Barcelona scholar of the fourteenth century, Abraham Ben Hayyim Ben Remok? They can show you a MS. of his in the Bodleian. And Russiaen, Lithuanian, Arab, and Greek doctors, mathematicians, poets, chess-players, and men of prayer—"the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand"—here they are! Perhaps you never heard of the Baron Ephraim Lopez Pereira d'Aguilar, whose farm, in Colebroke-row, Islington, was known a hundred years ago as Starvation Farm, for that he starved his sheep and oxen, his he-goats and she-goats most abominably, but left £200,000 to his daughters. Here are his biography and his portrait.

But why do we potter round in a volume which contains articles on Aaron, Ablutions, Abraham, Anglo-Israelism, Angelology, Apocalypse, and Alpha and Omega? Or why do we seek to compass the magnitude of a work which gives a drawing of Abraham's Oak at Mamre? The oak still puts forth leaves as it did when Josephus referred to it, and the Crusaders rested in its shade, and told each other that here Abraham bargained with Ephron, the Hittite, for the cave of Machpelah. Let the scope and magnificence of this work, now in its first stage, struggle through our sentences. Already we seem to hear the exultant words: "So the wall was finished in the twenty-and-fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days. And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes; for they perceived that the work was wrought of our God."

W. Cosmo Monkhouse.

An Appreciation.

It is to be feared that the great British public has not been particularly perturbed by the announcement of the decease of William Cosmo Monkhouse. It takes a great deal to catch and hold the attention of "the average man" in this more-or-less United Kingdom; and Monkhouse had succeeded in impressing his individuality upon two classes only—those who are interested in the pictorial arts, and those who are specially interested in the art of poetry. With his work and influence as an art critic I have nothing to do for the moment; it is as a writer of verse that he attracts me mainly. And as such, one is obliged to admit, his vogue was, and remains, limited. How could it be otherwise? To begin with, he was not an advertising man; and, secondly, there were few to advertise him. He had his influential admirers, who worked loyally for him, so far as it was possible. But not much was possible. It was Monkhouse's misfortune (or advantage—who shall say which?) that the greater part of his time and energy was given, not to verse-work, but to prose-work about pictorial art. He wrote some dozen books on the latter subject; his verse-books are only three in number—*A Dream of Idleness*, published in 1865, when he was only twenty-five years of age; *Corn and Poppies*, printed twenty-five years later—i.e., in 1890; and *The Christ on the Hill*, a single ballad brought out in folio and with sumptuous illustrations, in 1895.

Now, this record shows quite sufficiently that Monkhouse was not primarily a poet. No convinced and consecrated bard could be satisfied with such an output. Monkhouse could have had no overwhelming leaning towards the poetic life and fame, or he would not have occupied so much of his leisure from official work in the criticism of painters and of painting. He began, to be sure, as a poet, but within three years he sought fame as a fictionist, though he never repeated the experiment. His poetry, we may take it, was the flower, it was not the business, of his life. Something of the man is revealed in the preface to the *Dream of Idleness*—a preface singularly dignified and self-respecting. It was a sign of the old head on the young shoulders. Though he was only sixty-one when he died, he was, in a sense, old from his youth up. He always had, if one may say so, a sort of aged air. And that, perhaps, accounts for the singular maturity of his first verse-volume. *A Dream of Idleness* was more than promising; it was, in its way, a definite, though small, achievement. Its chief weakness was an obvious and admitted indebtedness to Tennyson. The young writer had been markedly impressed by *In Memoriam*, and wrote several pieces on the same metrical model. There was an echo, too, of *Maud* in such lines as these:

I am fallen in love with pain,
Such treachery lurks in delight,
Then leave me alone to the wind and the rain
Alone to the starless night:
Alone to the starless night,
Where the willow is tearing her hair,
Where the aspen is white with a shivering fright,
And the poplar-tree writhes in despair.

Still more marked was the influence of the Tennysonian blank verse in the "idyl" called "Restored to Sight," and beginning:

O blessed Eve! O blessed Christmas Eve!
When our good Vicar's well-beloved wife
Beheld her home and husband once again.

That Tennyson had always had a magnetic charm for Monkhouse was shown again in *Corn and Poppies*, with its imitation of the elder writer's "Recollections of the Arabian Nights," called "Recollections of Alfred Tennyson," and its open confession—

My soul was steeped in the golden rhyme
Of Tennyson, the Laureate.

In *A Dream of Idleness*, a notable feature was the writer's frequent use of the sonnet form. In *Corn and Poppies* one sees signs of the interest he had come to take, in the long interval, in the old French forms which Mr. Gosse and Mr. Dobson did so much to popularise in English. The dedication took the shape of a rondel, and in the body of the book there were four rondeaux, to say nothing of a "Virelai Ancien." Of the rondeaux Mr. Le Gallienne gave specimens in the "Morris" volume of *The Poets and the Poetry of the Century*. I prefer to reproduce here the *rondeau redoublé* which appeared for the first time in the collection called *Latter-Day Lyrics* (1878), and which was never reprinted by its author. I give it because it is characteristic of the man as well as a piece of poetic ingenuity:

My soul is sick of nightingale and rose,
The perfume and the darkness of the grove;
I weary of the fevers and the throes,
And all the enervating dreams of love.

At morn I love to hear the lark, and rove
The meadows, where the simple daisy shows
Her guiltless bosom to the skies above—
My soul is sick of nightingale and rose.

The afternoon is sweet, and sweet repose,
But let me lie where breeze-blown branches move.
I hate the stillness where the sunbeams doze,
The perfume and the darkness of the grove.

I love to hear at eve the gentle dove
Contented coo the day's delightful close.
She sings of joy and all the calm thereof—
I weary of the fevers and the throes.
I love the night who like a mother throws
Her arms round hearts that throbbed and limbs
that strove,
As kind as Death, that puts an end to woes
And all the enervating dreams of Love.
Because my soul is sick of fancies wove
Of fervid ecstasies and crimson glows,
Because the taste of cinnamon and clove
Palls on my palate—let no man suppose
My soul is sick.

Perhaps one reason why Monkhouse, as a poet, never seized and retained the ear of the public may be found in his very versatility. Though his verse-production was small, it was wide in range. He could descend with ease and effect from the heights of "A Dead March" (his *chef d'œuvre*, as I think most judges allow) to the comparative depths of the "familiar"—such as his lines, in his first volume, on "My Friend," and his stanzas in his second volume, called "De Libris." Concerning his books he wrote:

And some are dear as friends, and some
We keep because we need them;
And some we ward from worm and thumb,
And love too well to read them.
My own are poor, and worthy new,
But I've an Elzevir or two.

For the writing of familiar verse Monkhouse had undoubtedly a gift.

Possibly some one—Mr. Gosse or Mr. Dobson—may now give us a selection from the verse of Monkhouse. It would be a small volume if it contained only what posterity is likely to care for and accept. Monkhouse wrote little that had absolute finish and felicity. He was more interesting, more valuable, as a man than as a verse-writer or a prose-writer. But are not all men greater than their works? Monkhouse was content to make no loud or violent appeal to the outer world. He lived his own life in his own way. And who can blame him? No one is called upon to live for the benefit of the outsider. Monkhouse gave the public three slender books of verse; he was probably under no delusion as to the amount of permanent matter which they contained.

W. D. A.

Correspondence.

Mr. Hall Caine.

SIR,—I cannot refrain from writing to you with regard to the criticism of *The Christian* which you quote from the new *Quarterly*. It seems to me most unfair, if not altogether unjust, to classify Mr. Caine with Miss Corelli. When Mr. Caine wrote *The Deemster* and *The Bondman* there was hardly a paper of any standing in London and the provinces that did not hail him as a genius. Praise was literally heaped upon him. We were told that a new great writer was among us, that he had developed the English novel on new lines, and that he had a wonderful future before him. Among others who acknowledged his genius I call to mind John Ruskin, Wilkie Collins, Thomas Edward Brown, A. T. Quiller-Couch, R. D. Blackmore, W. E. Gladstone, etc., who were unanimous in asserting that he was in the very front rank of living English novelists. But, according to the *Quarterly* critic, all these men of intellect and literary feeling were wrong, and he only is right; for surely it is not possible that he wishes us to believe that Hall Caine once possessed genius, but that of late years it has entirely evaporated? I challenge anyone to read *The Scapegoat*, or either of the above-named novels, and then peruse such a palpably absurd article as

that quoted in your paper without a feeling of impatience and annoyance. To put the case in a very mild form, Mr. Caine has a sense of style, excellent spelling, and correct grammar. Can anyone say the same of Miss Corelli?

It may be very true that many inferior writers attain an immense popularity, but it does not necessarily follow that all popular writers are inferior, even in these days. Besides, was there ever a time when the critics accepted large circulations without demur? We all know what they had to say about Dickens. It seems to me that the present position of Mr. Hall Caine with regard to his critics has been brought about by the indiscreet things he has from time to time spoken to interviewers, but more especially by the untrue stories which his so-called friends have persistently circulated about him. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that I believe his name will go down to posterity when the name of Miss Corelli is entirely forgotten. If being an admirer of Mr. Caine's necessitates being a unit of the "vast and half-educated public" sneered at by the *Quarterly* critic, then I am proud of being half-educated, and happy to belong to such a public.—I am, etc.,

C. FRED KENYON.

Ellesmere Park, Eccles.

SIR,—In your current issue you cite, with seeming approval, some remarks suggested to a *Quarterly* reviewer by the contemplation of the many editions of the works of Miss Corelli and Mr. Caine, which, if we may credit their publishers' announcements, are called for by the reading public. We learn that the reading public of England has been converted "from an aristocracy into a huge heterogeneous democracy," and that "whereas formerly the novels which had most readers were those which, in the opinion of all competent judges, were the best," the very reverse is the case now. Unfortunately for the *Quarterly* reviewer, the facts which move him to such melancholy reflections have existed as long as there has been an organised literature; at all times there have been works of inferior literary merit, but enjoying a very large circulation. The *Quarterly* reviewer instances Dickens, Thackeray and George Eliot; it is doubtful if even Dickens had such a large average circulation as Reynolds, G. P. R. James, or Harrison Ainsworth; it is almost certain that Lady Blessington and Mrs. Gore commanded a larger sale in their day than did George Eliot. The result is the same if we look abroad. Eugène Sue sold better than Balzac; Paul de Kock sold better than even Dumas, whilst some thirty years earlier Ducray-Dumesnil and Pigault-Lebrun, names practically forgotten now, were far and away the most popular French novelists, far more popular than Madame de Stael, Chateaubriand, or the youthful Hugo. But the most striking example comes from Germany; during the period when Goethe, Schiller, Jean Paul, Tieck, Novalis and Fouqué were writing the masterpieces of modern German literature, the really popular writers, the men who made money out of literature, were K. G. Cramer and Vulpius. *Rinaldo Rinaldini der Räuberhauptmann* could have given *Wilhelm Meister* or the *Wahlverwandtschaften* an easy beating in the matter of circulation. Personally, I am convinced that if a Dickens or a Thackeray were to appear now they would command that wider sale that is denied, for perfectly intelligible reasons, to Mr. Meredith, Mr. Hardy or Mr. James.

In reviewing Brandes' *Main Currents in Nineteenth Century Literature*, would it not have been advisable to state that the Danish original is some thirty years old, and that for the last twenty-five years the work has been a classic in Germany, the four volumes having been published in a most excellent German translation by A. Strodtmann from 1872 to 1876? Vol. IV., *Der Naturalismus in England, etc.*, is, save for its insufficient apprecia-

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tion of Coleridge, the sanest and most brilliant account extant of the great group of poets writing in England from 1790 to 1825.—I am, etc.,

ALFRED NUTT.

Rivals in Age.

SIR,—You say in your issue of July 20 that the "Notes and Queries" column of the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* has run longer than any other such feature in a provincial newspaper. Allow me to explain that a similar column, called "Bye-Gones," in the *Border Counties Advertiser* (Owesity), has been running since 1871, and I am inclined to think that if it was not the first provincial column of the kind to be published, it was the first to be reprinted in periodical parts. The volumes of *Bye-Gones* from 1871 to 1900 lie before me.—I am, etc.,

E. WOODALL (Ed. *Bye-Gones*).

Owesity.

Our Weekly Competition.

Result of No. 96 (New Series).

LAST week we offered a prize of One Guinea for the best four-line stanza on a dead author. We award the prize to Miss Mary A. Woods, Clifton-gardens, W., for the following:

ROBERT BROWNING.

The paths of night and death unscathed he trod,
His eye still fixed where, pale in whitening skies,
Love's herald-star assured a sun's uprise,
And darkness slain, and earth "afire with God."

Other verses follow:

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

The mountain tops of letters were his aim:
A mountain top received his weary frame:
With hardihood the highest peaks he scaled:
Flushed with success, how was it that he failed?

[P. A., Ramsgate.]

R. L. S.

Far Samoa marks his tomb:
Britain gives his spirit room.
Dead the breather, yet the breath
Comes and comes, defeating death.

[H. J., Hadley Wood.]

POPE.

His special points were elegance and wit,
Neat phrasing formed his intellectual scope,
A rare causticity that ever bit—
These were the Cardinals that made this Pope!

[F. H. D., Torquay.]

HEINE.

Heinrich Heine! bitter-sweet!
Sweet as opening rose's breath:
Bitter as house where mourners meet:
Sweet as Life and bitter as Death.

[A. G. M., Glasgow.]

SAPPHO.

Quenched are the fires long since: long stilled the heart—
Thy stormy heart: sweet Sappho. But, for me,
Thou Sleepest—and from thy lips, in dreaming, start
Sweet broken fragments of thy Reverie.

[H. C. P.]

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

Dear Coleridge, thy flame of life burnt fast:
Weak-willed and tempest-tost from first to last—
Yet Wisdom writ in blood, and Song divine
But prove the strength of weakness such as thine.

[H. G. T., London.]

JOHN KEATS.

The love of beauty "held him, like a star"
That shone unmated o'er this world's endeavour;
And by its splendour, drawn from earth afar,
He built on dreams, which live, with him, for ever.

[A. E. W., Greenock.]

GOLDSMITH.

In winsome words, simple with gold inwrought.
Goldsmith! Well-named thou gavest us thy thought;
But since, alas! thou laid'st thy cunning tools away
Perforce with weary words of gilt we rest content to-day.

[W. F., Dunoon.]

TENNYSON.

Freedom he sang: our hearts would brim
Beneath that strong, heroic strain.
He sleeps: our hardlings pipe in vain;
The voice of England sleeps with him.

[C. C. F., Epworth.]

CHAUCEER.

Chaucer is dead that made the welkin ring
With songs that told the world made holiday;
For then all months were May, all seasons Spring;
And are they not to-day?

[TWENTIMAN, Birmmham.]

BROWNING.

Tho' oft thy voice be harsh as iaven's croak,
Thy gait more shambling than the camel's roll,
Yet lovable in its strength, like some gnarled oak,
Browning, is thy gaunt gladiator soul.

[S. Y., Eastbourne.]

EMILY BRONTË.

Your body died, and few men shed their tears:
But that bright, quenchless fire that lit your eyes—
That stern white spirit of passionate Love shall rise,
And purify mankind through countless years.

[C. F. K., Eccles.]

RUSKIN.

What need is there of verse to sing thy praise?
Ruskin, historian of the visionary;
Since, from her sunlit stones and moonlit ways,
Venice sings thee one grand apostrophe!

[F. C. H., Cardiff.]

DICKENS.

Ah! Dickens, king of laughter and of tears,
Thy charm outruns the cavalcade of years:
Still are we cheered or softened by thy spell,
And laugh at *Pickwick*, sigh for *Little Nell*.

[J. K. W., Cornwall.]

Competition No. 97 (New Series).

In the "Literary Lounger" column of this week's *Sketch* appears the following paragraph:—

With regard to the fashion of re-christening and re-issuing old books, which has grown considerably of late on both sides of the Atlantic, an American literary journal suggests that a big success is in store for the publisher who will bring out a new edition of *Robinson Crusoe* as *On a Desert Island*, and *Aesop's Fables* under the title of *Animals Who have Talked with Me*.

We offer a prize of One Guinea for the best re-christenings of six well-known books. The actual and proposed titles should be written down in parallel columns, each opposite each.

RULES.

Answers, addressed, "Literary Competition, THE ACADEMY, 43, Chancery-lane, W.C.," must reach us not later than the first post of Wednesday, July 31. Each answer must be accompanied by the coupon to be found on the second page of *Wrapper*, or it cannot enter into competition. Competitors sending more than one attempt at solution must accompany each attempt with a separate coupon; otherwise the first only will be considered. Contributions to be written on one side of the paper only.

